John Carter Brown.

E/8

John Stanley

TRAVELS

THROUGH

LOUISIANA.

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THROUGH THAT PART OF

NORTH AMERICA

FORMERLY CALLED

LOUISIANA.

BY M. BOSSU, Captain in the
French Marines.

TRANSLATED FROM THE FRENCH,
BY JOHN REINHOLD FORSTER, F.A.S.

ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES HISTORICAL, CRITICAL, &
NATURAL HISTORY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED, BY THE TRANSLATOR,

A SYSTEMATIC CATALOGUE OF ALL THE
KNOWN PLANTS OF EASTERN NORTH-AMERICA,

AND

A COPIOUS AMERICAN SYNONYMOUS INDEX.

ILLUSTRATED WITH

AN ABSTRACT OF THE MOST USEFUL AND
NECESSARY ASTRONOMICAL OBSERVATIONS

MADE BY

PETER LOTTIN, Jun.

DURING THREE AND TWENTY YEARS RESIDENCE IN AMERICA.

Printed for the Proprietor of the original Work, and Sold by G. ROBINSON,

VOL. I.

LONDON:

PRINTED BY T. DAVIES, IN RUSSEL-STREET, COVENT-GARDEN.

M DCC LXXII.

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LOUISIANA.

JOHN CARTER BROWN

BY MR. BOSSU, CAPTAIN IN THE FRENCH MARINES.

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BY JOHN REINHOLD FORSTER, F.A.S.

ILLUSTRATED WITH NOTES RELATIVE CHIEFLY TO NATURAL HISTORY.

TO WHICH IS ADDED BY THE TRANSLATOR

A SYSTEMATIC CATALOGUE OF ALL THE KNOWN PLANTS OF ENGLISH NORTH-AMERICA,

OR, A

FLORA AMERICÆ SEPTENTRIONALIS.

TOGETHER WITH

AN ABSTRACT OF THE MOST USEFUL AND NECESSARY ARTICLES CONTAINED IN PETER LOEFLING'S TRAVELS THROUGH SPAIN AND CUMANA IN SOUTH AMERICA.

Referred to the Pages of the original Swediſh Edition.

VOL. I.

Ornari res ipſa negat, contenta doceri. *Horat.*

LONDON:
Printed for T. DAVIES in Ruſſel-Street, Covent-Garden.
MDCC LXXI.

TO

WILLIAM CONSTABLE, Esq;

of BURTON-CONSTABLE.

SIR,

THE zeal with which you promote the great cause of learning, and especially that of Natural History, the Polite Arts and Antiquities, intitle you to the regard and homage of every one who is conversant with Arts and Sciences: but the favour you were so kind to bestow upon me, before you proceeded on the tour through the different parts of Europe, encourages me to take this early opportunity to congratulate you on your return to your philosophic retirement, and publicly to acknowledge the gratitude and attachment which will ever prompt me to think myself happy in my weak endeavours to approve my conduct and sentiments to my friends and benefactors.

May

May you always enjoy perfect health, and all the rational and moral bleſſings of this life; and, after a long ſeries of years, diſtinguiſhed by actions of benevolence, friendſhip, and virtue, exchange theſe tranſitory enjoyments for everlaſting felicity. Theſe are the ſincere and invariable wiſhes of him who ſubſcribes himſelf, with the trueſt regard,

SIR,

Your moſt obliged

LONDON, Oct. 5. 1771.

obedient humble ſervant,

JOHN REINHOLD FORSTER.

PREFACE.

THE preſent publication appears with a view to ſupply the Engliſh reader with a good account of a country, which now enjoys the happineſs to be under the mild influence and ſway of the Britiſh ſceptre; and, if properly adminiſtered and peopled, might in time become one of the great ſupports of that power, which makes *Great Britain* reſpected over all the globe. The country here deſcribed is ſuſceptible of great improvements, capable to ſupply the mother-country with immenſe ſtores of raw materials for her manufactures, and to take in return the products of our induſtry; a commerce which, connected with religious and civil liberty, is the only baſis on which the grandeur of this nation can be laſtingly founded with any degree of probability.

The Catalogue of North American plants is a mere attempt, to make the curious more attentive to the American ſpontaneous products, and which will give a higher degree of certainty of ſucceſs to the plantations of ſuch plants as were recommended to the public, by the ingenious and great promoter of Natural Hiſtory and Plantations *John Ellis*, Eſq; in a *Catalogue of ſuch foreign plants as are worthy of being encouraged in our American colonies for the purpoſes of medicine, agriculture, and commerce.*

The

The Engliſh names affixed to the greater part of the plants, will make it more eaſy to the common people to know and to uſe them, bring the ſcience more down even to the loweſt capacities, fix the hitherto vague and multifarious denominations of plants in various parts of America, and obviate that confuſion and dryneſs already too common in the ſtudy of that uſeful branch of knowledge.

Loefling's deſcriptions of the Spaniſh and South American plants are the only things in his journal which deſerve the attention of a curious reader; the letters publiſhed along with them in the Swediſh, are compliments of a grateful pupil to his tutor, and queries and *dubia* relative to botany, and therefore not worth a tranſlation. The Engliſh public has now all the voyages and publications of the Linnæan ſchool; *Hoſſelquiſt*, *Oſbeck*, *Toreen*, *Kalm*, and *Loefling* make the whole of them.

The French word *outarde* ſignifies commonly a *buſtard*, but in North America they give that name to a kind of geeſe, which I therefore beg to correct, vol. i. p. 96.; having but lately got an information about it, from a gentleman who is juſt returned from North America.

The *Sardines* mentioned vol. i. p. 2. are not, as I have ſuſpected in the note, the *pilchards*, ſo common on our weſtern coaſts; but a kind of herring, not yet deſcribed, peculiar to the neighbourhood of *Belle-Iſle*, and the coaſt of French Bretany.

TRAVELS THROUGH LOUISIANA.

LETTER I.

To the MARQUIS de l'ESTRADE.

The Author's Departure for America; Deſcription of the Town of Cape François; *Cruelties of the Spaniards towards the Natives of the Iſle of St. Domingo; working of the Mines; true Origin of the Mal de Naples.*

WHEN I had the honour of taking my leave of you, I was ordered to communicate to you every particular that ſhould appear remarkable to me in this new world; you farther deſired of me an account of all intereſting ſubjects which might happen on

the paſſage. I am glad that my ſtay at *Cape François* affords me an opportunity of fulfilling an engagement which is dear to me, becauſe its execution may prove agreeable to you.

I was at *Belle-Iſle* in 1750, *M. Le Chevalier de Groſſoles* commanded at that place; he gave me a letter from the Count *d'Argenſon*, from which I learnt, that his Majeſty had made me Lieutenant in the Marines; this Miniſter gave me orders to ſet out immediately for *Rochefort*; accordingly I went on board the firſt fiſhing ſmack deſtined to carry the Anchovies * *(Sardines)* to *Rochelle*, which are caught on the Coaſt of *Bretany*, and which are the chief ſupport of the inhabitants of *Belle-Iſle*.

In

* The *true Anchovies* are caught in the Mediterranean; and thoſe few that now and then appear in the ſeas near *England* or *France*, are rather rare examples; they are certainly not ſo numerous that a profitable fiſhery of them could be inſtituted. The *Sardine* of our Author, therefore, ſeems to be the *Pilchard*, a fiſh that is very copiouſly caught on the coaſts of *Cornwall* and *French Bretany*. *Linnæus* has no peculiar ſpecific name for this fiſh, though the great *Engliſh* natural hiſtorian, *Ray*, in his Syn. piſc. 104, had pointed out the characters of this ſpecies; which now is done more fully by Mr. *Pennant*, in his Britiſh Zoology, III. p. 291. F.

In November we weighed anchor before the *Palace* *, (which is the name of the town on this iſland); and the very firſt night of our voyage we had ſuch a violent ſtorm on the coaſt of *Poitou*, that our little veſſel being beat about and ſurrounded by the waves, we expected every moment to go to the bottom: The crew conſiſted of a pilot, and three ſailors from Lower *Bretany*, who are commonly called *Sea-wolves* †; and are ſo well accuſtomed to this element, that they brave the hardeſt weather. The wind having increaſed, our captain was obliged to put in at the *Iſle de Dieu*, ſituated between *Poitou* and the county *d'Aunis*. We ſtaid there eight days; at the expiration of which, the ſea being calmed, we ſet ſail again, and continued our voyage to the Iſle of *Rhé*; from whence I croſſed a channel of the ſea about three leagues broad, that ſeparates the iſle from the continent, and arrived at *Rochelle*, and the day after I came to *Rochefort*. I was directed to addreſs myſelf to the intendant of the department of the marine, who is M. *le Normant de Méſi*, a man of real merit, and deſerving of the place he occupies, by his talents and the goodneſs of his heart: he told me, that, as ſoon as I ſhould have equipped myſelf for my voyage, I was to go to *Rochelle*,

* Le Palais. † *Loups de mer.*

and embark in the ſhip called the *Pontchartrain*, of 400 tuns. M *le Normant* had freighted this ſhip for the King's account, in order to tranſport four companies of the marines, whom we took in at the citadel on the iſle of *Rhé:* they were deſtined to reinforce the garriſon of *New Orleans*.

We ſet ſail from *Rochelle* the 26th of December, and had contrary winds for above a fortnight on the coaſt of Spain. We were already willing to put in at *Corunna*, in order to be ſheltered from the violence of the winds; when happily the wind ſhifted; and, towards the end of January, we were in ſight of *Madeira*, an iſle belonging to *Portugal* *; it is called the queen of iſlands, on account of its fertility and the excellence of its ſoil; it has near twenty leagues in circumference, produces good wines, and very fine fruits.

On the 15th of February we paſſed the tropic of Cancer. The next day the ſailors ſpent in ſome

* It is an African iſland in the Atlantic ocean, and ſituated to the north of the Canary iſlands; which latter were diſcovered in 1417, by a Norman gentleman called *Jean Bethencourt*, who bore the title of King of the Canaries, and made the conqueſt of them to the Spaniards, who poſſeſs them now.

ſome ridiculous ceremonies, which they oblige thoſe to undergo who never paſſed the line before: they are baptiſed with ſea-water; but may avoid this too abundant aſperſion by making a ſmall preſent to the boatſwain.

Two months after leaving *Rochelle* we arrived at Cape *François*, in the iſle of *St. Domingo*; which is that part of *America* where the Spaniards have firſt built towns and forts.

The town lies at the bottom of a promontory: it is defended by a fort cut in the rock, at the entrance of the port. This fortreſs, which has a good ſtore of artillery, projects into the ſea; and by that means forms a cape, from whence the town takes its name. Its inhabitants are European merchants, Creoles, and negroes; the laſt being employed to cultivate ſugar-canes, coffee, indigo, cacao, cotton, caſſia, tobacco, and various other products.

The French and Spaniards have divided the iſland between them; the latter poſſeſs the weſtern part of it*. *San Domingo* is the capital of the

* Since that time the Spaniards have given their ſhare of this iſland to the French. F.

the iſland; it is the ſeat of a biſhop, whom the King of Spain appoints.

This iſland is celebrated by the origin of the *mal de Naples*, or venereal diſeaſe. Authors diſagree ſo much on this ſubject, and have told the ſtory in ſo many different ways, that I think I ſhall not do amiſs to repreſent it in its true light.

Nicolas de Obando was governor of this iſle, towards the end of the fifteenth century, during the reign of King *Ferdinand* of *Arragon* and *Iſabella* of *Caſtile:* he had ſtrict orders to work at the converſion of the ſubdued Indians; he diſtributed them among the Spaniards, giving a hundred of them to one man, fifty to another; and calling this proceeding a *repartimiento*, (a diviſion). I believe you will agree with me, Sir, that this is a very ſingular method of making converts in *America*; ſuch maxims are quite contrary to the true ſpirit of the Chriſtian religion *.

Theſe

* "The King Don *Ferdinand*, being informed of theſe "diſorders, had turned all his attention towards remedying "them; and his care chiefly regarded the Indians, whom "he wiſhed to protect and convert, as it has always been the "maxim of the Catholic kings. He gave ſeveral orders, "and

Theſe Spaniards, greedy of gold, forced the wretched Indians to work in the mines, and kept them almoſt buried in the earth for eight or nine months together. This hard labour, the ſulphureous vapours which continually roſe from the mines, and the famine to which they were reduced by the impoſſibility of cultivating their grounds, ſo corrupted the maſs of their blood, that their faces became tinged with a ſaffron colour; a kind of puſtules came out on every part of their body, and cauſed them inſupportable pains. They ſoon communicated this ſickneſs to their wives, and ſo of courſe to their enemies; and they all periſhed for want of a remedy.

The afflicted Spaniards hoped, that this kind of peſt would not follow them to *Europe*, whither they went for the change of air; but they were deceived; and, on their return, they gave the Europeans the diſtemper they got from the *Americans*.

" and publiſhed laws, that they ſhould be inſtructed with " mildneſs, diſintereſtedneſs, and by example: but as an " arrow falls without force at the bottom of the aim, when " it is beyond the reach of the arm that ſhot it; ſo, all the " methods which he made uſe of to make his deſigns ſuc- " ceed, loſt their force as they got to a greater diſtance."
Don Antonio de Solis.

However, Providence pitied theſe wretched iſlanders: an Indian woman, the wife of a Spaniard, diſcovered, ſome time after, that a kind of wood called *guayacan*, was a ſufficient cure for their diſtemper *.

It is but too true, Sir, that evil produces evil. The Spaniards have ſacrificed millions of men in the new world; they have laid waſte countries of vaſt extent, in order to uſurp the gold of the Indians.

Gold and ſilver give as much trouble and fatigue to thoſe who work them out of the mines, as they afford contentment and eaſe to their poſſeſſors. A Spaniſh engineer told me, that twenty-nine years were ſpent in ſearching, in the mountains of *Potoſi*, for the famous vein of *Cruſéro*, which is two hundred and fifty yards deep. Such is the hard and ſupernatural labour which power and deſire of riches exacts, and which is executed

* Notwithſtanding what our author ſays concerning the origin of this diſeaſe, it is well known, that the inhabitants of South and North America had the diſeaſe when the Europeans came to them; but they well knew how to cure it, though they carefully kept this knowledge from their European enemies; and it has but lately been diſcovered, that in the ſouth the *Guayacum*, and in the north the *Stillingia ſylvatica*, together with other plants, are the Indian ſpecifics. F.

executed by neceſſity and ſervitude, in order to extract gold from the bowels of the earth. The wretched workmen who are employed there, enjoy neither the air of our atmoſphere, nor the light of the ſun, and bury themſelves in infectious and cold abyſſes; of which the exhalations are ſo unwholeſome, that they cauſe ſwoons and giddineſs to the workmen as ſoon as they offer to go in. They make uſe of candles to light them in theſe dark ſubterraneous places: the metal is generally hard in them; they break it in pieces with hammers, load it on their ſhoulders, and mount upwards on ladders made of twiſted hides of oxen, with wooden ſteps, contrived in ſuch a manner, that whilſt one goes up on one ſide, another may deſcend on the other: theſe ladders are divided into ten ſets. A man generally carries two *arobas* of metal on his back *, wrapped up in a piece of cloth: he that goes firſt has a candle faſtened to his thumb; and they all hold themſelves with both hands on the ladder, in order to be able to go upwards for the ſpace of 250 feet.

The general hiſtory of *America* tells us, that the nations of *Florida* took the ſacks with ſilver, and threw them far from themſelves as uſeleſs. The *Mexicans*, on the contrary, were fond of gold;

* An Aroba is 25 pounds, *poids de Marc*.

gold; though, as *Joſeph d'Acoſta* ſays, in his univerſal hiſtory of the Indies, "it is true that "their avarice was not arrived to that pitch "where ours is; and that, notwithſtanding "their being idolaters, they never have worſhip-"ped gold and ſilver ſo much as ſome bad "Chriſtians have done, who have committed "the moſt atrocious crimes for the ſake of that "metal."

The ſame author relates the following anecdote, which perfectly characterizes man's ſtupid deſire after riches. "A Spaniſh monk, conſi-"dering the height of the famous volcano of "*Guatimala*, took it into his head, that that "which he ſaw inflamed muſt needs be a maſs of "gold, ſince it had burnt for many ages toge-"ther without being conſumed. Miſled by this "falſe principle, he invented ſome kettles, "chains, and other inſtruments, with which "he intended to draw the liquid gold from this "kind of well: but the fire diſappointed him; "for the chain and kettle were ſcarce entered "into this infernal orifice, but they immediate-"ly melted down. However," ſays our author, "this man perſiſted in inventing new methods "for fetching up the gold after which he thirſted "ſo much; but one day happening to come too "near the mouth of the volcano, the exhalations

"from

"from it killed him, when he expected to have "succeeded in his whimsical design. Thus "blind mortals hasten their death by too great a "pursuit after the luxuries of this life."

But to return to the Indians of *Saint Domingo*. The history of that isle informs us, that a *Cacique* * called *Poncra*, being harassed by the Spaniards, resolved to flee from his village, which the enemies found abandoned, and where they took three thousand marks of gold, which had been left there. *Vasco Nunez de Balboa*, the successor of *Nicolas de Obando*, sent his people to the Cacique, with orders to assure him, that he should not fear to return, because he should be his friend; but that if he did not come back, he should go and hunt for him, and cause him to be devoured by his dogs †.

Poncra

* A cacique is a petty prince or king of the Indians.

† The Spaniards had brought over with them from *Europe* some mastiffs, which they had taught to hunt the Indians; as soon as they were let loose upon these wretches, they tore out their bowels, and devoured them. One of these dogs called *Barémel* was very much dreaded all over the island; and though he was guarded by a shield against the arrows of the Indians, they, it is said, at last killed him, by piercing his eyes with darts, which was a kind of triumph for them.

Antonio

Poncra was frightened by his threats, and did not venture to diſobey. He brought with him three of his vaſſals. *Nunez de Balboa* employed in vain all the cunning imaginable to bring him to diſcover the place where they got the gold, which he had heard contained great quantities of that metal: good uſage and puniſhments were equally inſufficient to bring him to confeſs what perhaps he did not know. As to the three thouſand *marks* of gold which had been found, *Poncra* ſaid, that thoſe who had amaſſed them died in the times of his fathers, and that he had not thought it worth while to ſend people to ſearch for more, having no need of it. This unhappy Cacique was given up to the fury of the dogs, that devoured him with his three companions.

Some time after, a Spaniard fell into the hands of the ſubjects of the unhappy *Poncra*; they reproached him with the exceſſive thirſt of his countrymen after gold, and the injuſtices it led them

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Antonio de Herrera, in his firſt *Decas*, relates, that this fierce creature, whoſe inſtinct was ſingular, guarded a narrow paſs in the iſle of *St. Domingo*; and that one day an Indian woman, being deſirous of paſſing by him, addreſſed him in theſe words: *Signor Dog, do not hurt me*; *I carry this letter to the Chriſtians:* he adds, that *the dog immediately ſmelled at her, piſſed at her*, (thoſe are his very words) *and ſuffered her to paſs without doing her any harm.*

them to commit; that this avidity alone forced them from their country, and brought them acroſs numberleſs perils to that iſland, to diſturb its inhabitants, who lived peaceably before in their huts, under the protection of the *Great Spirit* *.

After this ſhort harangue, they melted ſome gold, and poured it into his mouth and ears, ſaying, *Thou dog, ſince thou art ſo willing to poſſeſs it, glut thyſelf.*

It muſt, however, be owned, Sir, that, if the Mexican hiſtory ſhews us nothing but horror, that of *St. Domingo*, on the other hand, furniſhes us with inſtances of generoſity.

Don Pedro de Magaratit, formerly a commandant here for the King of Spain, was offered a couple of living turtle-doves, by an Indian in a great famine. The general took them, paid the Indian handſomely for them, and begged part of the garriſon to go with him to the higheſt part of the town; where, being arrived, he ſaid to them, holding the little creatures in his hand, "Gentlemen, I am ſorry that people "have

* Thus the Indians call the Supreme Being.

"have not brought me proviſions ſufficient to "treat you all; I cannot reſolve to ſatisfy my ap-"petite, whilſt you are ſtarving:" and as he had ſpoke theſe words, he let the birds fly away.

An infinite number of other inſtances may be added to this, which do no leſs honour to the inhabitants of this iſle. There are ſeveral that deſerve to be recorded in hiſtory; and among thoſe that I have been told, I cannot help thinking the following ſtory worth your notice. An old inhabitant of St. Domingo had acquired a conſiderable fortune there by his labour, induſtry, and trade. His conduct and manners remained unaltered by proſperity; and he only valued his riches, becauſe they enabled him to ſerve others.

Whenever a ſhip arrived from France, he ran to the coaſt to ſee the paſſengers land, and generally conducted them to his home. One day he ſaw ſeveral young people, who expected to make their fortune as ſoon as they arrived; they had letters of recommendation, on which they depended ſo much, that they took little notice of the good planter, who accoſted them; he left them, wiſhing them all kind of proſperity: ſome

ſome time after he met them again looking very ſad and diſcontented with the reception they had found. Gentlemen, ſays he to them, you are not recommended to me, and you did not rely on me. I am your fellow-creature, and you want aſſiſtance; come to my houſe, you will there find a table and a lodging at your ſervice; and during that time perhaps ſomething may offer, that will ſuit your inclinations. The young people were enraptured, and accepted his offers; they followed him to his houſe, where they found a table ſpread for twenty perſons, and ſerved by as many Negro ſervants. One of the new comers aſked whether they were at a wedding, and was ſurpriſed to hear that this was nothing extraordinary. The maſter of the houſe kept them in his houſe for ſome time; his advices, and the pains he took about them, ſoon procured them very advantageous ſituations.

You will eaſily believe, Sir, that ſo good a maſter was loved and reſpected by all his ſlaves, who looked upon him as upon their father. This man was very far from being animated by the brutal avidity of ſome planters, that force their wretched ſlaves to ſuch hard labour, that they refuſe to marry, in order to avoid generating ſlaves to ſuch maſters, who treat them, when

when old and infirm, worſe than their dogs and horſes*.

As to the inhabitants of the French iſlands in the Weſt Indies, I can aſſure you they are very generous towards ſtrangers: a perſon may even travel in the interior parts of the country, without the leaſt expence to himſelf; if his countenance be free and open, and his behaviour decent, he is ſufficiently qualified for a favourable reception in every habitation.

It is with great juſtice that we reckon the *Creoles* noble in France: their ſentiments are ſo noble and delicate in every ſtation of life, that they perfectly deſerve that appellation.

Man is every where the ſame; he is equally ſuſceptible of good and evil; education corrects his vices, but does not give him virtue; the ſame

* I have ſeen a planter, whoſe name was *Chaperon*, who forced one of his negroes to go into a heated oven, where the poor wretch expired; and his jaws being ſhrivelled up, the barbarous *Chaperon* ſaid, I believe the fellow laughs, and took a poker to ſtir him up. Since that time he is grown the ſcare-crow of all the ſlaves; who, when they have done ſomething amiſs, are threatened by their maſters with, *I will ſell thee to Chaperon.*

ſame Being has created the civilized man and the ſavage, and has endowed them with the ſame qualities, as you will find in the ſequel of my correſpondence. If I cannot amuſe you with my ſtile, at leaſt I ſhall make my narrative intereſting, through the ſingularity of the facts I intend to relate.

I am, SIR, *&c.*

Cape François, the 15th of February 1751.

LETTER II.

To the same.

The Author's Departure from Cape François *for* Louisiana. *Short Description of the Harbour of the* Havannah. *Of the famous Gulph of* Mexico; *and of* New Orleans.

SIR,

WE weighed anchor the 8th of March last; and on the 15th we were in sight of *Cuba*, which is the most temperate of all the *Antilles*. The *Havannah* is the store of all the riches of America, on account of its situation, and the extent and convenience of its harbour, which can contain upwards of a thousand ships. It is the common *rendez-vous* of the Spanish fleets returning to Europe; and it is defended by three forts. *Cuba* is two hundred leagues long, and between twenty-five and thirty broad; sixteen years have been spent in discoveries to ascertain whether it was an isle or continent:

continent: it lies under the tropic of Cancer, that is, in twenty-three degrees and a half north latitude. Near the middle of the iſland, to the ſouthward, are a number of little iſles very cloſe to each other, which are called the Garden of the Queen *.

During the equinox we ſuffered a very violent ſtorm between Cape *Catoche* and Cape *Antonio*; the latter, which we doubled on the twenty-third, is at the weſtern point of the iſle of *Cuba*. I was very ſea-ſick, having never been at ſea on ſo long a voyage; but the deſire of ſerving my country in a new land, ſufficiently compenſated all the hardſhips I underwent on my paſſage. The winds changed, the ſea became ſmooth, and, a few days after, we entered into the famous gulph of *Mexico*, where we met with a prodigious quantity of floating timber, coming from *Louiſiana* down the river *Miſſiſippi*: theſe logs of wood are ſeen for above two hundred leagues at ſea, and ſerve as guides to the entrance of the river in hazy and foggy weather; it being very difficult to get into it, on account of the rocks and ſhoals in the neighbourhood of its entrance.

* Jardin de la Reyna.

In the first days of April we perceived the fort *Balise* at the mouth of the *Mississippi*. Mr. *le Moine d'Iberville*, a Canada gentleman, discovered, in 1698 *, this mouth of the river, which M. *de la Salle* missed in 1684. Our vessel struck upon the bar; we fired a gun to call the pilot, and at the same time the captain disembarked the artillery of the ship, and the two hundred regular troops which were on board for the service of the colony of *Louisiana*; which made the vessel so much lighter, that she came afloat again.

On the 4th of April, we set on shore eighteen officers at Fort *Balise* †, where M. *de Santilly* commanded: this officer treated us to the best of his power, while we stayed at his post, which is entirely surrounded with marshes full of serpents and crocodiles.

The *Marquis de Vaudreuil*, governor of *Louisiana*, being informed of our arrival, sent several boats

* Mr. *d'Iberville*, governor of *Louisiana*, conducted the first colony thither in 1699: after his death the country had no governor for a long while: the second was M. *de la Motte Cadillac*; and the third, M. *de Bienville*, youngest brother of the first.

† They reckon thirty leagues from this place to *New Orleans*, on account of the bendings in the river.

boats to fetch us, and to bring us refreſhments; we diſtributed our ſoldiers on board them, and, by ſailing and rowing, we got to *New Orleans* on Eaſter-day. The Marquis *de Vaudreuil* is to receive twenty-four companies of marines, to augment the forces in *Louiſiana*; theſe troops come on board of merchant-ſhips, freighted for the King's account; there are likewiſe ſome female recruits enliſted in *France*, who come to people theſe climates. Induſtrious ſoldiers, who chuſe to marry theſe girls, get their diſmiſſion, and a certain number of acres of ground to cultivate: they get victuals from the King for three years together, and he makes them a preſent of half a pound of gun-powder, and two pounds of ſhot every month; of a gun, a hatchet, a pick-axe, and corn to ſow their fields; with a cow, a calf, cocks and hens, &c.

The Marquis *de Vaudreuil* has diſtributed the twenty-four new companies in the different parts of the colony, without any regard to perſons; ſo that every one may equally ſhare the advantages and the diſadvantages. As to the detachment near the *Illinois*, a poſt five hundred leagues diſtant from *New Orleans*, it has fallen to the ſhare of the company to which I belong. I have the honour of being among the officers which M. *Rouillé*, the ſecretary of ſtate for the marine, has

has recommended to the Marquis *de Vaudreuil*; and I am made perfectly ſenſible of the deference ſhewn to ſuch a recommendation. I can aſſure you, Sir, that the General's table is of great uſe to me, and to all thoſe that are lately arrived, and have not had time to take any fixed lodgings. The affluence is very great; but the governor does the honours of his table in ſo noble and generous a manner, that he acquires the eſteem and friendſhip of all the officers, who juſtly ſtile him the father of the colony. M. *Michel de la Rouvilliere*, who ſuperintends the markets *, likewiſe contributes to render life agreeable to us, by the juſt prices he fixes upon the victuals of the country, and by every thing relative to his office.

We expect to ſet out for the *Illinois* the 20th of Auguſt next; Mr. de *Macarty*, who is to go with us, has been appointed commandant of the detachment by the court. The different nations which I ſhall be obliged to viſit during this long voyage, will furniſh me amply with materials for a deſcription of the fine river *Miſſiſippi*, and the people on its banks.

In the mean while, I intend to give you a deſcription of *Louiſiana* in general; but I believe I do

* L'ordonnateur.

I do not need to be very prolix on this ſubject, as you probably know moſt of the plans and accounts that have been publiſhed of it. Let me only obſerve to you, that *New Orleans*, the ſtreets of which run all in ſtreight lines, is now much greater and more populous than formerly. There are inhabitants of four ſorts, *viz.* Europeans, Americans, Africans or negroes, and *Meſtizos* *. The latter are thoſe born of Europeans and the natives of this country, whom we call ſavages. The *Creoles* are thoſe that are born here of a French man and French woman, or of European parents.

The Creoles in general are very brave, tall, and well made; they are well diſpoſed for cultivating the arts and ſciences; but as they cannot make great progreſs therein for want of good maſters, the rich and well-meaning fathers ſend their children to *France*, as to the beſt ſchool in the world, for all ſorts of acquirements.

As to the fair ſex, whoſe only art is that of pleaſing, they are already born with that advantage here, and have no need to acquire it in Europe.

* Métiſs.

New Orleans and *Mobile* are the only towns where they ſpeak the French pretty pure. The negroes are brought thither from Africa, and are employed in cultivating the grounds, which are excellently adapted to the culture of indigo, tobacco, rice, maize, or Indian corn, and ſugar-canes, of which they have already made plantations that have ſucceeded very well. Thus the merchants, tradeſmen, and ſtrangers, who live here, enjoy as it were an enchanted abode, rendered delicious by the purity of its air, the fertility of its ſoil, and the beauty of its ſituation. *New Orleans* lies on the banks of the *Miſſiſippi*, which is one of the greateſt rivers in the world; becauſe, for 800 leagues together, it paſſes through known countries. Its pure and delicious water * runs for the ſpace of forty leagues between a number of habitations, which form an elegant ſight on both its ſhores; where the pleaſures of hunting and fiſhing, and all other enjoyments of life, are abundant.

The capuchins are the firſt monks that went over to *New Orleans* as miſſionaries in 1723. Their ſuperior was the vicar of the pariſh; theſe good

* *M. le Normant de Méſi*, being *Intendant* of the marine at *Rochefort*, always drank this water at his table. It has the quality of contributing to the fecundity of women.

good friars only employ themſelves in affairs relative to their ſtation in life.

Two years after, the Jeſuits ſettled in *Louiſiana.* Theſe cunning politicians have found means to get the richeſt ſettlement in the whole colony, which they have obtained through their intrigues.

The Urſuline nuns were ſent thither almoſt at the ſame time. The occupation of theſe pious girls, whoſe zeal is truly laudable, is the education of young ladies; they likewiſe receive orphans into their community, for which the King pays them fifty *écus* a-head penſion. Theſe nuns are likewiſe charged with the care of the military hoſpital.

My ſtay here has as yet been ſo ſhort, that I have not been able to give you any account of the nations which inhabit the banks of the river; however, I will endeavour to give you an idea of the character and turn of the *Chitimachas*, who are ſettled on a river or branch which bears their name, to the weſtward of *New Orleans:* I believe the anecdote will prove intereſting to you, though this nation is very near extinct.

In

In 1720, one of their nation, having hid himſelf in a lonely place on the banks of the *Miſſiſippi*, had murdered the *Abbé de St. Côme*, who was then the miſſionary of the colony. M. *de Bienville*, who was then governor, made the whole nation anſwerable for it; and, to ſpare his own people, he employed ſeveral nations of his allies to attack them.

Theſe Indians were worſted; the loſs of their beſt warriors forced them to aſk for peace: the governor having granted it them, on condition that they would bring the head of the murderer, they punctually executed that condition; and afterwards preſented the *calumet* or pipe of peace * to M. *de Bienville*.

The following is a relation of what I have heard concerning the ceremonies of this ſolemn embaſſy.

They arrived at *New Orleans*, ſinging the ſong of the calumet, which they diſplayed to the wind,

* The calumet is a long pipe, with a head of red, black, or white marble, and a pipe of a reed two and a half or three feet long. The Indians ſend it by deputies to thoſe nations with whom they will renew or treat of peace. It is adorned with the feathers of the white eagle; it is a ſymbol of peace and plenty amongſt them; and one may go every where without fear, with the calumet in hand, becauſe nothing is held more ſacred.

wind, and in a certain cadence, to announce their embaſſy; and they were dreſſed out with their beſt ornaments, as is always uſual amongſt them on ſuch occaſions. The chief of the deputation ſaid to the governor: *How happy am I to find myſelf in thy preſence; thou haſt long been angry with our nation; we have been informed of what thy heart has told thee, and we have heard with great joy, that it was willing to give us fine days.* They then ſat down on the ground, leaning their faces on their hands, the ſpeaker without doubt to recover his breath, and the others to keep ſilent. During this interval every body was ordered not to talk, nor to laugh whilſt the harangue laſted, becauſe they would be affronted at it.

The ſpeaker, ſome moments after, aroſe with two others; one of them filled the pipe of the calumet with tobacco, the other brought fire; the firſt then lighted the pipe; the ſpeaker ſmoked a while, and then preſented the pipe to M. *de Bienville*, that he might do the ſame; accordingly the governor, and all the officers that compoſed his retinue, ſmoked out of this calumet, each according to his rank: as ſoon as this ceremony was over, the old orator took back the calumet, and put it in M. *de Bienville's* hands, in order to be preſerved by him. The

ſpeaker

ſpeaker remained ſtanding, and the other ambaſſadors ſat down near the preſent which they had brought, and which conſiſted of roe-buck and doe ſkins, and in ſome other furs, all dreſſed white, as a ſign of peace.

The ſpeaker or chancellor was dreſſed in a robe of ſeveral marten-ſkins ſewed together; it was faſtened to his right ſhoulder, and paſſed under his left arm; he wrapped himſelf up in this robe, and began his ſpeech with a majeſtic air, addreſſing himſelf to the governor: "My "heart laughs for joy on ſeeing myſelf before "thee; we have all of us heard the word of "peace which thou haſt ſent us: the hearts of "our whole nation laugh for joy on that occa-"ſion; the women, forgetting that inſtant all "that paſſed, have danced; and the children "have leapt like young roe-bucks. Thy words "ſhall never be forgotten, and our deſcendants "will remember it as long as the ANCIENT "WORD * ſhall laſt: as the war has made us poor, "we have been obliged to make a general hunt "or chace, in order to bring thee ſome furs: "but we were afraid of going to any great di-"ſtance, leſt the other nations ſhould not yet "have heard thy word; nor are we come hither "but trembling all the way, till we ſaw thy face.

"How

* Thus they call *traditions*.

" How glad are my eyes and my heart to be-
" hold thee this day. Our preſents are ſmall,
" but our hearts are great to obey thy word; at
" thy commands thou ſhalt ſee our legs run and
" leap like thoſe of the ſtags, to do as thou ſhalt
" pleaſe."

Here the orator pauſed a little; then raiſing his voice, he gravely continued his diſcourſe.

" How beautiful is the ſun to-day, in com-
" pariſon with what it was when thou wert an-
" gry with us! How dangerous is one villain!
" Thou knoweſt that a ſingle man has killed
" the *chief of the prayer* *, whoſe death has cauſed
" that of our beſt warriors: we have only old
" men, and women with their children remain-
" ing, who all ſtretch out their arms towards
" thee as to a good father. The gall that for-
" merly filled thy heart, has given way to ho-
" ney; the great ſpirit is no longer irritated
" againſt our nation; thou haſt required the
" head of a villain from our hands, and in order
" to obtain peace we have ſent it thee.

" The ſun was red before, all the roads were
" full of thorns and briars; the clouds were
" black, the water troubled and ſtained with
" our

* So they call our miſſionaries.

" our blood; our women lamented without inter-
" miſſion the loſs of their relations, and durſt not
" venture to go and fetch wood for preparing
" our victuals; at the leaſt ſhriek of the birds
" of night all our warriors were on foot; they
" never ſlept without their arms; our huts were
" abandoned, and our fields lay fallow; we had
" all of us empty ſtomachs, and our faces look-
" ed long and meagre; the game and wild-fowl
" fled far from us; the ſerpents angrily hiſſed
" at us; and the birds that perched near our
" habitations ſeemed, by their doleful notes, to
" ſing us ſongs of death.

" To-day the ſun is bright, the ſky is ſerene,
" the clouds are vaniſhed, the roads covered
" with flowers; our gardens and fields ſhall
" henceforth be cultivated, and we will offer
" their firſt-fruits to the great ſpirit; the water
" is ſo clear that we ſee ourſelves in it; the ſer-
" pents fly from us; the birds amuſe us by the
" ſweetneſs and harmony of their ſongs; our
" wives and children dance, and forget to eat and
" to drink; the whole nation laughs for joy, to
" ſee us walk on the ſame road with thyſelf and
" the French; the ſame ſun ſhall light us, we
" ſhall have but one and the ſame ſpeech, and
" our hearts ſhall make but one; we will kill
" them that ſhall kill the French; our warriors
" ſhall

"ſhall hunt to make them ſubſiſt, and we will "eat together: Will not that be good? what "doſt thou ſay to it, father?"

To this diſcourſe, which was ſpoken with a firm tone of voice, with grace and decency, and even, if I may be allowed the expreſſion, with the moſt majeſtic deportment, M. *de Bienville* anſwered in a few words, in the common language, which he ſpoke pretty fluently; that he was very glad that their nation had recovered their ſenſes; he gave them ſomething to eat; and, as a mark of friendſhip, he put his hand into that of the ſpeaker, and ſo ſent them home ſatisfied.—Since that time they have always been inviolably attached to the French, and furniſh *New Orleans* with game.

My third letter will prove more intereſting; however, I hope I have hitherto fulfilled my promiſes; and am,

SIR, &c.

New Orleans, the 1ſt of July 1751.

LET-

LETTER III.

To the ſame.

Deſcription of the religious Cuſtoms and Ceremonies of ſome Nations which inhabit the Banks of the great River Miſſiſippi. *Conſpiracy of the Natches againſt the French.*

SIR,

I AM now arrived at the place where the great nation of the *Natches* formerly lived, of which the public news have ſaid ſo much. It is aſſerted, that this formidable nation gave laws to others, on account of the great extent of their country. They inhabited all the ſpace of land between the river *Menchak*, which is about fifty leagues from the ſea, and the river *Hoyo*, which is near 460 leagues from the ſea.

On

On the 20th of Auguſt we ſet out from *New Orleans* on our voyage to the *Illinois*, in ſix boats, on board of which were the four companies about which I wrote to you in my preceding letter, commanded by *M. de Macarty*. We are obliged to row up againſt the current of the river *Miſſiſippi*, on account of the many windings of that river, which runs between two great foreſts, the trees of which appear to be as ancient as the world.

The firſt places you come to on your voyage are two villages peopled with Germans, being the reſt of a grant made, in 1720, by the King to Mr. *Law*. This colony was to conſiſt of Germans and Provençals, to the amount of 1500 perſons; the ground for it was laid out near a wild nation called the *Akançaſ*; it was four leagues ſquare, and the colony was erected into a dutchy. They had already tranſported thither the ammunition and ſtores for a company of dragoons, and merchandiſes for the value of upwards a million of *livres*; but Mr. *Law* failed, and the India company, which was at that time eſtabliſhed in Louiſiana, took poſſeſſion of all the goods.

The coloniſts ſeparated, and the Germans ſettled ten leagues above *New Orleans*: they are

very laborious, and are looked upon as the providers and victuallers of the town. The two villages are under the direction of a Swediſh captain *.

Two leagues further you find a nation called *Colla-piſſas*, who are diſtinguiſhed by their attachment to the French; they are now reduced to a very ſmall number; their true name is *Aquelon Piſſas*, that is, the nation who hear and ſee.

Next you meet with the *Oumas*, who adore the ſun. This nation, with moſt of the others in America, believes, that the Supreme Being reſides in the ſun, and that he deſires to be revered in that vivifying orb, as the author of nature: they ſay, there is nothing here that can be compared to him, and that this wonder by enlightening the earth, ſpreads joy and abundance on it Upon theſe principles they worſhip him, as the viſible image of the greatneſs and goodneſs of a deity, that condeſcends to make himſelf known among men, by diſtributing his benefactions amongſt them.

Fifteen

* It is Mr. *Arenſbourg*, who was at the battle of Pultava in 1709, with Charles XII. This old officer is the head of a numerous family eſtabliſhed in Louiſiana.

Fifteen leagues above the *Oumas*, in going up the river, you arrive at the *Cut point*. This place is about forty leagues diſtant from *New Orleans*. The ſoil of it is very fertile, and covered with fruit-trees. There are a number of Frenchmen in this part of the country, who apply themſelves to the culture of tobacco, cotton, rice, maize, and other corn; the coloniſts likewiſe trade in building-timber, which they carry down the river to *New Orleans* upon rafts.

Upon the left ſhore of the river, a little above the *Cut-point*, you ſee the village of the *Tonikas*, an Indian nation who have ever been attached to the French. Their chiefs have always exerted themſelves to be our allies in war; the laſt of them, who was very brave, received a dangerous wound in an expedition againſt the *Natches*: the King, on receiving an account of this affair, honoured him with a commiſſion, as brigadier of the armies of red men; and further preſented him with a blue ribbon, from which hung a ſilver medal, with a repreſentation of *Paris*: he likewiſe received a gold-headed cane.

After the maſſacre of the French by the *Natches*, whereof I intend to give you an account in its place, a part of that nation pretended to be deſirous of making peace with the

grand chief of the *Tonikas*: the latter communicated this to the commander-general of the French, to whom he was very much attached; the *Natches* prevented the anſwer, and aſſaſſinated the *Tonikas*, beginning with their grand chief; his enemies, who feared our advice and our forces, made haſte to ruin and deſtroy a great number of his ſubjects. We ſhall always lament, together with theſe good Indians, the loſs of a man, whoſe great qualities would do honour to a civilized nation.

After eighty leagues navigation from the capital of *Louiſiana*, we arrived at the poſt of the *Natches*, which, about twenty years ago, was very conſiderable, but is very inſignificant at preſent.

The fort is ſituated on an eminence, which commands the river *Miſſiſippi*, from which it is about the diſtance of a cannon-ſhot. The ground, which in this country is always riſing higher, would be one of the moſt fertile, if it were cultivated; tobacco, cotton, and maize ſucceed very well in it.

I have made ſome ſtay at this poſt, which is commanded by the Chevalier *d'Orgon*, a natural

ſon

ſon of the Prince *de Lambeſc*, of the houſe of Lorrain.

The *Natches* who lived here formerly were a very conſiderable nation. They formed ſeveral villages, that were under ſome peculiar chiefs; and theſe laſt again, obeyed one grand chief of the whole nation. All theſe princes bore the name of *Suns*; there were five hundred of them, all relations of the great Sun, their common ſovereign, who carried on his breaſt the image of the ſun, from which he pretended to trace his origin, and which was adored under the name of *Wachil*, which ſignifies *the great fire* or the *ſupreme fire*.

The manner in which the *Natches* rendered divine ſervice to the ſun, has ſomething ſolemn in it. The high-prieſt got up before ſun-riſing, and marched at the head of the people with a grave pace, and the calumet of peace in hand; he ſmoked in honour of the ſun, and blew the firſt mouthful of ſmoke towards him. On the appearance of that luminous body, all the byſtanders began to howl by turns after the high-prieſt, and contemplated it with their arms extended to heaven. Then they threw themſelves on the ground; and their women brought their

children, and taught them to keep in a devout attitude.

About their harveſt-time, which happened in July, the *Natches* celebrated a great feaſt. They began with blacking their faces; and did not eat till three hours after noon, having previouſly purified themſelves in the baths; the oldeſt man in the nation then offered to their deity the firſt fruits of their crops.

They had a temple in which they kept up an eternal fire; the prieſts took great care to preſerve it, and for this purpoſe they were only allowed to make uſe of the wood of one kind of tree; if unhappily the fire was extinguiſhed, all the people were in the greateſt conſternation, and the neglectful prieſts were puniſhed with death: but ſuch an event happened very ſeldom; for the keepers of this celeſtial fire could eaſily renew it, by fetching common fire under pretext of lighting their calumets; for they were not allowed to employ the holy fire for that uſe.

When their ſovereign died, he was accompanied in the grave by his wives, and by ſeveral of his ſubjects. The leſſer Suns took care to follow the ſame cuſtom; the law likewiſe condemned

demned every *Natchéz* to death, who had married a girl of the blood of the Suns, as ſoon as ſhe was expired. On this occaſion, I muſt tell you the hiſtory of an Indian, who was no ways willing to ſubmit to this law: his name was *Etteacteal*; he contracted an alliance with the Suns; but the conſequences which this honour brought along with it, had like to have proved very unfortunate to him. His wife fell ſick; as ſoon as he ſaw her at the point of death, he fled, embarked on a piragua on the *Miſſiſippi*, and came to *New Orleans*. He put himſelf under the protection of M. *de Bienville*, the then governor, and offered to be his huntſman. The Governor accepted his ſervices, and intereſted himſelf for him with the *Natches*, who declared that he had nothing more to fear, becauſe the ceremony was paſt, and he was accordingly no longer a lawful prize.

Etteacteal, being thus aſſured, ventured to return to his nation; and, without ſettling among them, he made ſeveral voyages thither: he happened to be there when the Sun, called the *Stung Serpent*, brother to the great Sun, died; he was a relation of the late wife of *Etteacteal*, and they reſolved to make him pay his debt. M. *de Bienville* had been recalled to France, and the ſovereign of the *Natches*

thought, that the protector's abſence had annulled the reprieve granted to the protected perſon; and accordingly he cauſed him to be arreſted. As ſoon as the poor fellow found himſelf in the hut of the grand chief of war, together with the other victims deſtined to be ſacrificed to the *Stung Serpent*, he gave vent to the exceſs of his grief. The favourite wife of the late Sun, who was likewiſe to be ſacrificed, and who ſaw the preparations for her death with firmneſs, and ſeemed impatient to rejoin her huſband, hearing *Etteacteal*'s complaints and groans, ſaid to him, Art thou no warrior? He anſwered, Yes, I am one. However, ſaid ſhe, thou cryeſt, life is dear to thee; and as that is the caſe, it is not good that thou ſhouldſt go along with us, go with the women. *Etteacteal* replied, True, life is dear to me; it would be well if I walked yet on earth till to the death of the great Sun, and I would die with him. Go thy way, ſaid the favourite, it is not fit thou ſhouldſt go with us, and that thy heart ſhould remain behind on earth; once more get away, and let me ſee thee no more.

Etteacteal did not ſtay to have this order repeated to him; he diſappeared like lightning: three old women, two of which were his relations, offered to pay his debt; their age and

their

their infirmities had diſguſted them of life; none of them had been able to uſe their legs for a great while. The hair of the two that were related to *Etteacteal*, were no more gray than thoſe of women of fifty-five years in France. The other old woman was a hundred and twenty years old, and had very white hair, which is a a very uncommon thing among the Indians: none of the three had a quite wrinkled ſkin. They were diſpatched in the evening, one at the door of the *Stung Serpent*, and the other two upon the place before the temple *.

The generoſity of theſe women gave *Etteacteal* life again, acquired him the degree of *conſidered*, and cleared his honour, which he had ſullied by fearing death. He remained quiet after that time; and, taking advantage of what he had learnt during his ſtay among the French, he became a juggler, and made uſe of his knowledge to impoſe upon his countrymen †.

The

* A cord is faſtened round their necks with a ſlip knot, and eight men of their relations ſtrangle them, by drawing four one way and four the other; ſo many are not neceſſary, but as they acquire nobility by ſuch executions, there are always more than are wanting, and the operation is performed in an inſtant.

† The jugglers in this country perform the functions of prieſts, phyſicians, and fortune-tellers, and chiefly pretend to paſs for ſorcerers.

The morning after this execution, they made every thing ready for the convoy; and the hour being come, the great maſter of the ceremonies appeared at the door of the hut adorned ſuitably to his quality; the victims who were to accompany the deceaſed prince into the manſion of the ſpirits, came forth; they conſiſted of the favourite wife of the deceaſed, of his ſecond wife, his chancellor, his phyſician, his hired man, that is his firſt ſervant, and of ſome old women.

The favourite went to the great Sun, with whom there were ſeveral Frenchmen, to take leave of him: ſhe gave orders for the Suns of both ſexes that were her children to appear, and ſpoke to the following effect:

"Children, this is the day on which I am to "tear myſelf from you arms, and to follow "your father's ſteps, who waits for me in the "country of the ſpirits; if I were to yield to "your tears, I would injure my love, and fail "in my duty. I have done enough for you, by "bearing you next to my heart, and by ſuck-"ling you with my breaſts. You that are de-"ſcended of his blood, and fed by my milk, "ought you to ſhed tears? Rejoice rather that "you are *Suns* and warriors; you are bound to "give examples of firmneſs and valour to the "whole

"whole nation: go, my children, I have pro-
"vided for all your wants, by procuring you
"friends; my friends, and thoſe of your father,
"are yours too; I leave you amidſt them;
"they are the French, they are tender-hearted
"and generous, make yourſelves worthy of
"their eſteem, by not degenerating from your
"race; always act openly with them, and never
"implore them with meanneſs.

"And you Frenchmen," added ſhe, turning herſelf towards our officers, "I recommend my "orphan-children to you; they will know no "other fathers than you; you ought to protect "them."

After that ſhe got up; and, followed by her troop, returned to her huſband's hut, with a ſurpriſing firmneſs.

A noble woman came to join herſelf to the number of victims of her own accord, being engaged, by the friendſhip ſhe bore the *Stung Serpent*, to follow him into the other world. The Europeans called her the *haughty* lady, on account of her majeſtic deportment, and her proud air, and becauſe ſhe only frequented the company of the moſt diſtinguiſhed Frenchmen; they regretted her much, becauſe ſhe had the know-

knowledge of ſeveral ſimples, with which ſhe had ſaved the lives of many of our ſick. This moving ſight filled our people with grief and horror. The favourite wife of the deceaſed roſe up, and ſpoke to them with a ſmiling countenance: "I die without fear," ſaid ſhe, "grief does not "embitter my laſt hours, I recommend my "children to you; whenever you ſee them, "noble Frenchmen, remember that you have "loved their father, and that he was till death "a true and ſincere friend of your nation, whom "he loved more than himſelf. The diſpoſer of "life has been pleaſed to call him, and I ſhall "ſoon go and join him; I ſhall tell him that I "have ſeen your hearts moved at the ſight of "his corps: do not be grieved; we ſhall be "longer friends in the *country of the ſpirits* than "here, becauſe we do not die there again *."

Theſe words forced tears from the eyes of all the French; they were obliged to do all they could to prevent the *great Sun* from killing himſelf; for he was inconſolable at the death of his brother,

* At the hour intended for the ceremony, they made the victims ſwallow little balls or pills of tobacco, in order to make them giddy, and as it were to take the ſenſation of pain from them; after that they were all ſtrangled, and put upon mats, the favourite on the right, the other wife on the left, and the others according to their rank.

brother, upon whom he was uſed to lay the weight of government, he being great chief of war of the Natches. *i. e.* Generaliſſimo of their armies; that prince grew furious by the reſiſtance he met with; he held his gun by the barrel, and the *Sun*, his preſumptive heir, held it by the lock, and cauſed the powder to fall out of the pan; the hut was full of *Suns*, *Nobles*, and *Honourables* *, who were all trembling: but the French raiſed their ſpirits again, by hiding all the arms belonging to the ſovereign, and filling the barrel of his gun with water, that it might be unfit for uſe for ſome time.

As ſoon as the Suns ſaw their ſovereign's life in ſafety, they thanked the French, by ſqueezing their hands, but without ſpeaking; a moſt profound ſilence reigned throughout, for grief and awe kept in bounds the multitude that were preſent.

The wife of the great Sun was ſeized with fear during this tranſaction. She was aſked whether

* The eſtabliſhed diſtinctions among theſe Indians were as follows: The *Suns*, relations of the great Sun, held the higheſt rank; next came the *Nobles*; after them the *Honorables*; and laſt of all, the common people, who were very much deſpiſed. As the nobility was propagated by the women, this contributed much to multiply it.

whether ſhe was ill; and ſhe anſwered aloud, "Yes I am;" and added, with a lower voice, "if the Frenchmen go out of this hut, my huſ-"band dies, and all the Natches will die with "him; ſtay then, brave Frenchmen, becauſe "your words are as powerful as arrows; be-"ſides, who could have ventured to do what "you have done? But you are his true friends "and thoſe of his brother." Their laws obliged the *great Sun*'s wife to follow her huſband in the grave: this was doubtleſs the cauſe of her fears; and likewiſe the gratitude towards the French, who intereſted themſelves in behalf of his life, prompted her to ſpeak in the above-mentioned manner.

The *great Sun* gave his hand to the officers, and ſaid to them: "My friends, my heart is ſo "overpowered with grief, that, though my "eyes were open, I have not taken notice that "you have been ſtanding all this while, nor "have I aſked you to ſit down; but pardon the "exceſs of my affliction."

The Frenchmen told him, that he had no need of excuſes; that they were going to leave him alone, but that they would ceaſe to be his friends unleſs he gave orders to light the fires again

again *, lighting his own before them, and that they ſhould not leave him till his brother was buried.

He took all the Frenchmen by the hands, and ſaid, "Since all the chiefs and noble officers "will have me ſtay on earth, I will do it, I will "not kill myſelf; let the fires be lighted again "immediately, and I'll wait till death joins me "to my brother; I am already old, and till I "die I ſhall walk with the French; had it not "been for them, I ſhould have gone with my "brother, and all the roads would have been "covered with dead bodies."

This prince only ſurvived the *Stung Serpent* one year, and his nephew ſucceeded him. The reign of that young prince proved very unfortunate to the colony. You ſhall ſee, Sir, by the ſequel of this letter, that the colony owes its ſafety only to the mother of this ſovereign; ſhe got from him the ſecret of the general conſpiracy againſt our nation, whom ſhe loved very much.

I muſt do juſtice to the Indians; the project which they formed of deſtroying all the French here,

* The great Sun had given orders to put out all the fires, which is only done at the death of the ſovereigns.

here, was not the reſult of natural inconſtancy or fickle temper; it was the bad conduct of an officer, who inſulted a people whom he ought to have treated gently, that rouſed their anger. Free born men, living peaceably in the country where their anceſtors ſettled, could not bear the tyranny which the ſtrangers exerciſed over them, who were come to ſettle amongſt them. The *Sieur de Chepar*, commandant of the poſt of the *Natches*, neglected to gain the eſteem of the French and the Indians under his care; he abuſed thoſe who would not enter into his criminal conduct, and truſted the moſt important poſts to ſerjeants and corporals who were entirely devoted to him. You can eaſily conceive, Sir, that the military diſcipline was entirely ſubverted by preferences of this kind, which are ſo contrary to ſubordination.

M. *Dumont*, the ſecond officer, made *remonſtrances*, which were not attended to, and to which he gave no other anſwer than by putting him in irons. As ſoon as he was ſet at liberty, he went down to the capital to lay his complaints before M. *Perrier*, then governor of *Louiſiana*. M. *de Chépar* was recalled to give account of his conduct; he was to be broken, but his intrigues and his patrons ſerved him, he was acquitted and ſent back to his poſt.

Inſtead

Inſtead of being corrected by this mortification, he conducted himſelf as before, and became the object of deteſtation and abhorrence of both the French and Indians; he irritated the latter, and forced them to come to the moſt violent extremities. M. *de Chepar*, deſirous of making his fortune in a ſhort time, ſummoned the *Sun* of a village called the *Apple*, to retire with his people, and to leave him the ground which he occupied, becauſe he wanted to make himſelf a habitation on it, which ſhould turn out to good account. The *Cacique* repreſented to him, that the bones of his anceſtors were repoſed there: his remonſtrances proved uſeleſs; the French commandant ordered the *Great Sun* to cauſe the village to be evacuated, and even threatened to ſend him loaded with irons to *New Orleans* in caſe of non-compliance. Perhaps this officer thought, he could treat the chief as a ſlave; he did not reflect, that he ſpoke to a man accuſtomed to command, and whoſe authority was deſpotic over his ſubjects.

The Great Sun heard him, and retired without ſhewing any paſſion; he aſſembled his council, where it was reſolved, that M. *de Chepar* ſhould be told, that before they could evacuate the *Apple* village, they muſt make the plan of another, and that this required two *moons* time.

This reſolution was notified to the governor, who ſent back the meſſengers, and threatened them with the ſevereſt puniſhments, if the village of the Apple was not put in his hands within a very ſhort term. This anſwer was brought to the council, where the old men were of opinion that they ought to gain time, during which they ſhould conſult upon the means of getting rid of theſe troubleſome ſtrangers, who were going to become tyrants. As they knew M. *de Chepar* to be very ſelfiſh, they agreed to propoſe it to him, to grant them a delay of ſeveral months, during which each hut was to give him a tribute in Indian corn or maize, in game, and in furs. The avarice of the governor made him fall into the ſnare; he accepted the propoſition, but pretended however that he only did it in order to oblige the nation, whom he loved on account of their conſtant friendſhip with the French. The *Great Sun* was not impoſed upon by this artful diſintereſtedneſs; he ordered his council to meet again, and informed them, that the term they had deſired had been granted, and that it was neceſſary they ſhould make good uſe of it, conſider of the means of getting rid of a heavy tribute, and above all of the tyrannical domination of the French. He obſerved, that ſuch an enterprize required an inviolable ſecret, ſolid meaſures, and, above all, a great deal of cunning;

cunning; he recommended it to them, that they ſhould in the mean while increaſe the proofs of confidence and friendſhip to the French; reflect upon what was to be done, and return to the council as ſoon as they had hit upon ſome project which might be attended with certain ſucceſs.

During five or ſix days the nobles and old men conſulted with each other, and met again unanimouſly reſolved to deſtroy all the French. The oldeſt man in the council, having ſaluted his chief, ſpoke to the following effect:

"We have long experienced, that the neigh-
"bourhood of the French does us more harm
"than good; we old men perceive it, but our
"youths do not ſee it; the European goods
"pleaſe the young people, but of what ſervice
"are they? They ſeduce our wives, corrupt
"the manners of the nation, debauch our girls,
"and make them proud and idle. The young
"men are in the ſame caſe; the huſbands muſt
"over-work themſelves, merely to ſatisfy the
"luxury of their wives. Before the French
"came into theſe countries, we were men, we
"were contented with what we had; we walk-
"ed boldly on all the roads, becauſe we were
"our own maſters; but now we only go by

"groping, for fear of finding thorns in our "way; we go like ſlaves, and ſuch we ſhall "ſoon be, ſince they uſe us as ſuch already. "As ſoon as they ſhall have power enough, "they will no longer keep in bounds, they will "load us with irons; has not their chief threat-"ened to offer that indignity to ours; and is "not death preferable to ſlavery *?"

Here the orator pauſed; and, after taking breath, continued as follows:

"What ſhall we wait for? Shall we ſuffer "the French to multiply till we can no longer "reſiſt them? What will the other nations ſay "of us? We paſs for the moſt ſenſible among "the *red* men †, and they will have reaſon to "ſay that we have leſs ſenſe than other people. "Why ſhall we wait longer? Let us ſet our-"ſelves at liberty, and let us ſhew that we are "true men. We muſt begin this day to pre-"pare for it; we muſt order our wives to get "victuals in readineſs, without telling them the "reaſon.

* Nature alone has taught theſe ſavages to reſpect their ſovereign, and to cheriſh liberty.

† Thus the Indians call themſelves, to diſtinguiſh themſelves from the Europeans who are white, and from the Africans who are black.

" reaſon. Let us bring the *calumet* of peace to
" all the nations of this country, and tell them
" that the French ſtrive to ſubdue this whole
" continent; and that, as they are ſtronger in
" our neighbourhood than any where elſe, we
" ſhall be the firſt whom they will load with
" their yoke. As ſoon as they ſhall have ſuffi-
" cient forces, they will load all the other na-
" tions with it; let us convince them how much
" it is their intereſt to prevent this misfortune,
" which cannot be avoided but by exterminating
" them; let all the nations join us in this un-
" dertaking; let us deſtroy the French every
" where on the ſame day, and at the ſame hour;
" let the time of the maſſacre be that of the ex-
" piration of the term their chief has granted
" us: thus we can free ourſelves from the tri-
" bute which we have laid on ourſelves; and
" thus the victuals which we brought them, will
" come into our poſſeſſion again: On that great
" day of liberty our warriors ſhall have their
" fire-arms with them; the *Natches* ſhall ſpread
" among the French, there ſhall be three or
" four of us in each houſe to one Frenchman;
" they ſhall borrow fire-arms and ammunition
" of them, under pretence of a general chace
" on account of ſome great feaſt, and they ſhall
" promiſe to bring back ſome game. Some
" guns fired near the houſe of the governor of

" the fort, ſhall be the ſignal for them to fall " upon the French. In order to make all the " advantage we can of this blow, the other na- " tions muſt ſecond us; they muſt make the " ſame maſſacre of the Frenchmen at their ſe- " veral ſtations; to be ſure of that, we muſt " make ſome bundles of rods, containing an " equal number, give each of them a bundle, " and keep one; let them take notice of the " number of days they are to wait; every morn- " ing one rod muſt be cut in pieces and thrown " into the fire, and when there will be but one " left, the time of the ſlaughter is come; it " muſt begin at the firſt quarter of the day (*i. e.* " at nine o'clock in the morning); we ſhall fall " upon our tyrants all at once; they ſhall be " overwhelmed on all ſides; and when they are " once deſtroyed, it will be an eaſy matter to " prevent thoſe from ſettling among us that " come from the old continent, acroſs the great " lake. It muſt be recommended before all " things, to be exact in drawing a rod from the " bundle every day; the leaſt miſtake can have " dangerous conſequences; we ſhall charge " ſome wiſe man with it, and we muſt beg our " neighbours to imitate us."

Here the orator gave over, and the old men approved of his propoſal; the *Sun* of the *Apple* village

village applauded above all; he was the moſt hurt by the injuſtice of M. *de Chepar*; his private revenge would accordingly be the moſt ſatisfied, he feared to ſee it fail, and therefore repreſented to the council the conſequences of indiſcretion, and even engaged them to keep the ſecret of this conſpiracy from the *female Suns* *. It now remained to make the grand chief of the *Natches* enter into their ſcheme; notwithſtanding the great deſire he had to be rid of the French, the project ſeemed too violent to him; the Sun of the Apple took upon himſelf to determine him to it; he was reckoned a man of ſenſe and penetration, and on that account was in great repute with the nation: he ſucceeded; he remarked to the great Sun the neceſſity of this meaſure, by telling him what he had to fear for himſelf; the French governor of the fort had threatened him, that he would ſoon drive him from his village; the great Sun was young, and conſequently a weak man, he that ſpoke to him was a cunning one, the deſign was approved of: the next morning, when the Suns came to ſalute their ſovereign, they received orders to go

* The Indians have two words to denote male and female Suns, (after the manner of the Engliſh words *prince*, *princeſs*) which the French author has happily expreſſed by *Soleil* and *Soleille*.

to the village of the Apple, under ſome pretence or other, without raiſing any ſuſpicion that they went thither in purſuance of ſome order; this was executed as required. The ſeducing genius of the Sun of the Apple attracted them all, and they all promiſed to enter into the conſpiracy. A council of Suns and old men was immediately formed; the project was propoſed there again, and carried unanimouſly; the old men were appointed ambaſſadors to the other nations; they had warriors to accompany them, and it was forbidden under pain of death to ſpeak of this to any perſon. They ſet out immediately all at once, and unknown to the French.

Notwithſtanding the profound ſecret that was kept among the Natches, the common people was uneaſy at the councils of Suns and noble old men that had been held; it is not uncommon in every country in the world, to ſee ſubjects endeavour to penetrate the ſecrets of the court. However, the curioſity of the people could not be ſatisfied; none but the female Suns (or princeſſes) had a right in this nation to enquire why they kept their proceedings ſecret from them. The young wife of the great Sun was but eighteen years old, and cared very little about it; only the female Sun called the *Stung Arm*, mother

of

of the ſovereign, and a woman of good ſenſe (which ſhe was not ignorant of) could take it ill, that they kept the ſecret from her. She ſhewed her diſcontentment to her ſon, who anſwered, that the embaſſies were ſent out for the ſake of renewing alliances with other nations, with whom they had long been at peace, and who might think themſelves deſpiſed if they were longer neglected. This diſſimulated anſwer ſeemed to appeaſe the Sun *Stung Arm*, but it did not take off her uneaſineſs; on the contrary it redoubled, when ſhe ſaw, upon the return of the ambaſſadors, that the Suns aſſembled in ſecret with thoſe deputies, to hear how they had been received, whereas ſuch councils were generally held in public.

The princeſs was vexed at this: What, ſaid ſhe to herſelf, they hide from me what the whole nation ought to know: if her prudence had not checked her anger, ſhe would have given vent to it then. It was happy for the French that ſhe thought herſelf thus deſpiſed; ſhe juſtly feared to augment the impoſſibility of coming at the ſecret, if ſhe laid open her diſpleaſure. Her genius ſuggeſted her the means of ſatisfying her curioſity; ſhe prevailed upon the great Sun, her ſon, to go with her to ſee a relation who lived in the village of the Apple, and who ſhe had heard

heard was very ill. Under pretence of leading him the fineſt road, ſhe took him on the longeſt, which was indeed the leaſt frequented. She had a good deal of penetration; ſhe imagined, that the motive of this ſecret aroſe from their carrying on ſomething to the diſadvantage of the French; what confirmed her conjectures, were the preparations which the Sun of the Apple was making. Finding herſelf in a ſolitary place with her ſon, ſhe ſpoke to him in the following words:

"Let us ſit down here, for I am tired, and "I have likewiſe ſomething to ſay to thee;" as ſoon as they were ſeated, ſhe added, "Open "thy ears to hear me; I never taught thee to "lie, and I always told thee, that a liar did not "deſerve to be ranked among men, and that a "lying *Sun* deſerved to meet with the greateſt "contempt, and even from women; therefore "I believe thou wilt tell me truth. Tell me "then, are not all the Suns brothers? How-"ever, they all keep off from me, as if my lips "were cut off, and I could not retain my words; "or doſt thou think that I ever ſpoke in my "ſleep. I am in deſpair to ſee myſelf ſlighted "by my brothers, but above all by thee. "What, art thou not my own offspring? Haſt "thou not ſuckled at my breaſt? And have I

"not

"not fed thee with my pureſt blood? Does not "the ſame blood run in our veins? Couldſt "thou be a Sun if thou wert not my ſon? Haſt "thou forgotten, that, without my care, thou "wouldſt have been dead long ago? Every "body, and I myſelf have told thee, that thou "art the ſon of a Frenchman*; but my own "blood is dearer to me than that of ſtrangers. "I now walk by thy ſide like a bitch, without "being looked upon; I wonder that thou doſt "not kick me away with thy foot: I am not ſur-"priſed that the others hide themſelves from "me; but thou, who art my ſon, canſt thou "do it? Haſt thou ever ſeen a ſon miſtruſt his "mother in our nation? Thou art the only "one of that temper. There is ſuch an uproar "in the nation, and I am ignorant of the cauſe "of it, I who am the old Sun; art thou "afraid that I ſhould rebuke thee, or make thee "the ſlave of the French, againſt whom you "act? O! I am tired of this contempt, and "of walking with ſuch ungrateful people."

The

* This princeſs had, for a long time, loved an officer of our nation; there was no doubt of his being the father of the great Sun, and that took off nothing of the reſpect that his ſubjects owed him; the women gave nobility among them, and they were contented if they were ſure of a man's mother, they cared very little to know who was his father.

The ſon of this Sun was quite ſtruck with her diſcourſe; he was moved by it to tears, and heard theſe remonſtrances with the uſual tranquility of an American, and with the reſpect due to a princeſs; he afterwards anſwered her to the following purport. "Thy reproaches are "arrows which pierce my breaſt, and I do not "think I ever ſcorned or deſpiſed thee; but haſt "thou ever heard it ſaid, that the reſolves of "the council of the old men may be revealed? "Is it not the duty of all men to keep ſecrets, "and I who am a ſovereign ought not I to ſet "an example? The great Sun my wife has "not been informed of the ſecret any more than "thyſelf. Though it is known that I am a "Frenchman's ſon, I have not been miſtruſted; "they have well imagined, that thy great ge-"nius would find out the ſecret of the council; "but when it was kept from the great Sun my "wife, was it fit that thou ſhouldſt be informed "of it? But ſince thou haſt gueſſed it all, "what can I tell thee further? Thou knoweſt "as much of it as myſelf, ſo ſhut thy mouth."

"I was dubious," ſaid ſhe, "about whom "you were taking ſo many precautions; but "ſince it is againſt the French, I fear you have "not taken your meaſures well to ſurpriſe "them: for I know they have a great deal of

"ſenſe,

" ſenſe, though the governor of this ſtation has " loſt his; they are brave; they have goods " in ſufficient quantity to make all the other na- " tions act againſt us. If you had a mind to at- " tack only the red men, I ſhould ſleep with " more ſecurity; I am no more young*; an " old woman's life is a trifle, but thine is dear " to me. If your old men have thought it as " eaſy a matter to ſurpriſe the French as the red " men, they are groſsly miſtaken; the French " have reſources which we have not, thou know- " eſt they have the *ſpeaking ſubſtance* (*i. e.* pa- " per)."

Her ſon told her, that ſhe had nothing to fear with regard to the meaſures which had been taken. After telling her all that I have juſt now informed you of, he told her that the bundle of rods was in the temple, upon the flat piece of wood (or the table).

When the princeſs was ſufficiently informed of every particular, ſhe pretended to approve of the proceedings; and, leaving her ſon entirely eaſy, ſhe only meditated on the means of rendering this barbarous deſign abortive; ſhe had but little time left, for the day fixed for the maſſacre was near at hand.

This

* Her lover was already dead ſome time.

This woman could not conſent to ſee all the French deſtroyed in one day by the conſpiracy of the *Natches*; ſhe therefore undertook to bid them keep upon their guard; for that purpoſe ſhe made uſe of ſome Indian girls who had French lovers, but ſhe commanded them expreſsly not to ſay that they acted by her orders.

The *Sieur de Macé*, enſign of the garriſon of the fort at the Natches, received advice by a young Indian girl who loved him; ſhe told him crying, that her nation was to maſſacre all the French. M. *de Macé*, amazed at this diſcourſe, queſtioned his miſtreſs: her ſimple anſwers and her tender fears left him no room to doubt of the plot: he went immediately to give M. *de Chepar* intelligence of it, who put him under arreſt for giving a falſe alarm; ſeven of the inhabitants of the fort, inſtructed by the ſame means, coming to aſk his leave to take up arms, in order to prevent a ſurpriſe, were put in irons; the governor treated them as cowards, and was vexed that they endeavoured to inſpire him with any miſtruſt againſt a nation that ſhewed ſo much friendſhip: the regularity of their payments kept up his ſecurity: he did not ſuſpect the politics of the Indians; he blindly deſpiſed them, nor did he think men of their kind capable of ſo much cunning.

The

The Sun *Stung Arm* saw with grief, that her cares for the conservation of the French were useless; she was determined to serve them in spite of themselves; she could not preserve them all, and therefore she endeavoured to lessen the number of victims as much as possible; she secretly went to the temple*, she drew a couple of rods out of the bundle unnoticed by the priests; her intention was to forward the day fixed for the execution of the conspiracy; she foresaw that the massacre which would happen at the *Natches* would soon be spread far about, that the French who were settled among the other nations would be informed of it, and be upon their guard. That was the only thing that remained for her to do, and she succeeded in it; the Natches found they were come to their last rod, without perceiving the imposture; they boldly began the intended slaughter, in the persuasion that their allies would act at the same time.

The 28th of December 1729, at eight in the morning, the Indians spread among the French; some discharges of guns, that were to serve as a signal, were fired near the door of M. *de Chepar*'s house;

* Only the Suns among the women could go into the temple.

houſe; and immediately they fell upon the French every where at the ſame time.

Meſſ. *de Rolly*, chief factors of the Weſt India company, were killed firſt. M. *de la Loire des Urſins* houſe made ſome reſiſtance; his ſervants killed eight *Natches* before they were overpowered. M. *des Urſins* himſelf, who juſt was taking a ride, but returned at the firſt firing of the guns, was ſtopped by a troop of Indians: he defended himſelf very bravely, killed four of them, and died pierced with wounds. This is all that the entrepriſe coſt the Indians: they murdered near two thouſand perſons; only twenty-five or twenty-ſix negroes eſcaped, and moſt of them were wounded. One hundred and fifty children, ninety women, and as many negroes, were taken priſoners, in hopes of ſelling them to the Engliſh in *Carolina*.

During this carnage the great Sun was quietly ſitting under one of the India company's ware-houſes; they brought him firſt of all the head of the governor, then thoſe of the chief Frenchmen, which he ordered to be ranged round the firſt. All the others were put in heaps; the corpſes were not buried, and became the prey of vultures; they cut open the bodies of women big with child, and murdered almoſt

almoſt all thoſe that had children at the breaſt, becauſe their cries and tears importuned them; they made all the reſt ſlaves, and treated them with the greateſt indignity.

Some people pretend, that M. *de Chepar* had the misfortune to periſh laſt of all, and to be the ſpectator of this horrible ſlaughter: he then found, but too late, how wiſe the advices were that had been given him. The Indians told him, that a *dog* as he was did not deſerve to die by the hands of warriors: he was given up to the *ſtinking fellows* *, who killed him with arrows, and afterwards cut off his head.

Such was the death of a man who only followed his own head, his cruelty, his avarice, and his ambition. As no Frenchman eſcaped from this maſſacre, it cannot be exactly aſcertained what kind of death they made the Governor undergo; it is enough to know, that his enemies were a barbarous people, whom he had irritated. A good adminiſtration would have attached them to the French, who drew great advantages from them: thus the fault of one man can draw after it the ruin of a whole colony; one cannot be

* The common people among the Natches are called *Miché-Michéquipi*, which ſignifies *ſtinking fellows*.

ſufficiently cautious in the choice of thoſe who are to be ſent as governors into thoſe parts. The Indians, notwithſtanding the ideas we have of them, are not always eaſily managed; politics and wiſdom muſt neceſſarily be employed, in order to obtain their friendſhip; they will not be offended with impunity, this hiſtory is a proof of it; nothing could be better conducted than the plot of the *Natches*; and how unhappy had it been, without the interpoſition of Providence! The Sun *Stung Arm* was worthy of the greateſt acknowledgements, but it is not well known how they have been made to her.

The nations who entered into the plot with the *Natches*, not knowing the ſtratagem by which the ſtroke had been advanced, believed they were betrayed: The *Chactaw* nation imagined, that the *Natches* were unwilling to give them their ſhare of the plunder of the French; and, to convince the latter that they had no part in the conjuration, they joined them in order to chaſtiſe the *Natches*. Theſe returned the French women and the negroes whom they had taken; ſome time after they were attacked in their intrenchments, but eſcaped by the help of a thunder-ſtorm, and quitted the country. About a thouſand of them were taken and brought to *New Orleans*, and afterwards ſold to the iſle of

St.

St. Domingo. Among these prisoners was the *Great Sun*, his wife, and his mother, who related to the French the above detail of the plot. The *Great Sun* disowned the massacre; he said that his nation had abused his youth, in order to strike this blow; that he had always loved the French; that it was their own chief who had compelled the *Natches* to this desperate action, by his extortions upon a free nation. The French were contented with his disavowal; they treated him and his mother and wife with gentleness; but as they did not return to their nation, they soon died with grief. Since that time this country is not inhabited: the *Natches*, being pursued by the French, and being too weak to resist them, took refuge among the *Chicachas* *, where they found an asylum.

We still have a fort here, but the colony is far from being brilliant; the means of establishing it would be to attract other Indians to it. This is all, Sir, which I can relate to you concerning this part of the country. I shall now soon leave it, and continue my voyage; and I conclude my letter, by renewing to you the protestations of those sentiments which you know me capable of. And am, SIR, &c.

At the Natches, Sept. 10. 1751.

† Chickasaws.

LETTER IV.

To the same.

The Author arrives at the Akanzas. *Unhappy Death of the People of* Ferdinando Soto. *Reflections on the Folly of Men who seek for a Mountain of Gold. Origin of the famous* Dorado. *Short Account of the tragic Death of M.* de la Salle.

SIR,

AFTER sailing about a hundred and twenty leagues to the north of the Natches, up the *Mississippi*, without meeting with any habitation on the road, we arrived among a nation famous for their friendship for the French, and known formerly from the expedition of *Ferdinando Soto*. I spoke to an old Indian chief of this country, who told me, he saw M. *de la Salle* here in 1682, when he discovered the great river *St. Louis*, known under

under the name of *Miſſiſippi*, or, as the Indians pronounce it, *Meſhaſſepi*, which ſignifies *all the rivers*, or the *great river*.

M. *de la Salle* paſſed by this nation in coming down the river: he made acquaintance with them, and took poſſeſſion of their country in the name of *Louis le Grand*, of glorious memory *; after fixing the croſs and the arms of France there, he followed the courſe of the *Miſſiſippi*, which enters into the famous gulph of *Mexico*. He took the latitude at its mouth, which he found to be twenty-nine degrees north; he ſailed up again afterwards to the river of *Illinois*, from whence he went to *Canada*, and from thence he returned into *France*.

* If tyranny, oppreſſion, and unbridled ambition are ſufficient to immortalize a prince, it is certain *Lewis* XIV. has a juſt claim to be called *great*. It was his happineſs to have great miniſters in the firſt part of his life, in a time when the greater part of Europe had very few manufactures; but he was weak enough to give ear to the advices ſuggeſted to him by the Jeſuits, and a ſuperannuated and bigotted miſtreſs: this overturned the ſyſtem of grandeur for which the miniſters had laid a good foundation, and Lewis had the misfortune to ſee all the rival nations around him grow powerful and rich, by the emigration of his oppreſſed Proteſtant ſubjects, and thus he outlived his own greatneſs: his death was the moſt fortunate event for France in her weak and exhauſted ſtate. F.

On his arrival at court, he imparted his discovery to Messr. *Colbert* and *de Seignelai*, who obtained for him a commission from the King, importing, that all the countries which he should discover from *New Biscay* to the *Illinois*, and the people, both French and Indians, that should be in those countries, should be under his orders.

It was at the same nation, called *Akanzas*, that Mr. *Joutel* arrived, who set out after the death of M. *de la Salle*, with guides to find out the *Mississippi*. This is the only officer who has left us an account which may be credited. I think I ought to give you an abstract of it; you will find the history of M. *de la Salle* in it, and of the end of his unlucky expedition.

In regard to *Ferdinand Soto*'s voyage, I shall but just mention, that the general history of the West Indies informs us, that this great officer, proud and enriched by the conquest of *Peru*, after imbruing his sacrilegious hands in the blood of the unfortunate family of the *Incas*, intended to penetrate into this country with the bravest of his soldiers, to subdue the nations that inhabit the neighbourhood of this river, of which I am going to give you a description; but he did not know the interior parts of this vast continent; perhaps he expected to find effeminate

nations

nations in it, as in South America; he was mistaken in his hopes, part of his people were killed with clubs by the Indians, who flayed the principal officers of his army, and afterwards expoſed their ſkins on the door of their temple, which ſo frightened the Spaniards that they reimbarked immediately for Europe.

The hiſtorian ſays, that *Ferdinand Soto* died of the ſhame which the bad ſucceſs of this enterprize had brought on him, in 1543; and, ſince that time till 1682, this fine country has been inhabited by no Europeans.

The fate of M. *de la Salle* has been no happier than that of *Ferdinand Soto*.

There is no virtue in man which is not blended with ſome faults; this is generally the fault of human nature; and what increaſes our humiliation, the greateſt virtues are often accompanied by the greateſt vices. You will eaſily perceive this, Sir, by the ſhort extract from M. *Joutel*'s Journal.

M. *Robert Cavelier de la Salle* ſet ſail from *Rochelle* the 24th of July 1684, with a ſquadron of four ſhips, commanded by M. *de Beaujeu*, a captain of a ſhip. Two hundred and eighty-

five perſons, together with thirty volunteers * and ſome gentlemen, and a number of workmen and girls embarked with him. M. *de la Salle* was on board M. *de Beaujeu*'s ſhip, in whom he repoſed no manner of confidence. Whatever that officer propoſed to him, he always anſwered with an air of haughtineſs, *This is not the King's intention*; he certainly did not take the proper ſteps to intereſt a man in his undertaking, whoſe aſſiſtance he wanted to make it ſucceed. Every one accordingly began to judge diſadvantageouſly of an expedition, the chiefs of which ſeemed to act by very different principles; and time has unhappily confirmed it.

The 28th of December 1684, the ſquadron diſcovered the continent of *Florida*; and M. *de la Salle* having heard much about the current that ſet in to the eaſtward in the Mexican gulph, he made no doubt but that the mouth of the *Miſſiſippi* was far to the weſt; an error that was the cauſe of all his misfortunes. Accordingly he bore away weſtward; but he advanced very little, becauſe he went near the ſhore from time to

* Among theſe were three prieſts of *St. Sulpitius*, one of them M. *de la Salle*'s brother, *Chedeville* his relation, and *Majulte*, beſides four recollects, who were to eſtabliſh the miſſions among the Indians. There were likewiſe two of his nephews, *Moranget* and *Cavelier* fourteen years of age.

to time, and ſailed along the coaſt, to try whether he could not diſcover what he ſought for.

The 2d of January 1685, the ſquadron was, according to conjecture, pretty near the mouth of the *Miſſiſippi*; and on the 10th they paſſed by it, without perceiving it. M. *de la Salle*, being perſuaded that the ſquadron was but juſt oppoſite the *Appalachian* mountains, continued his voyage without ſending his long-boat on ſhore.

It is ſaid, that people ſhewed him the mouth of the river, and that he would not ſo much as take the trouble of getting a certainty, becauſe he had taken it into his head, that it could not be the place which was pointed out to him. His obſtinacy could not be conquered nor juſtified.

He certainly did not know, or did not think of it, that the greateſt men in the world have often been, in part, indebted for their greateſt ſucceſs to people of inferior merit; and that thoſe are the wiſeſt, who profit by the advice and underſtanding even of thoſe that are leſs endowed than they themſelves.

Some time after, upon ſome hints which the Indians on the coaſt gave him, he wanted to return;

turn; but M. *de Beaujeu* refuſed to do him that favour. They purſued the ſame courſe; and the ſquadron, in a few days, came to *St. Bernard*'s bay, without knowing it. This bay is one hundred leagues to the weſtward of the mouth of the *Miſſiſippi*; they caſt anchor there, and ſent the boats upon diſcovery, in order to try to get knowledge of the place they were in. They found a very fine river, with a bar at the mouth of it, where there is not above ten or twelve feet water. This diſcovery was made after many times ſailing backwards and forwards, and after ſeveral meetings of the council, in which nothing was concluded, becauſe whenever one propoſed any thing, the other was ſure to oppoſe it.

M. *de la Salle*, who believed he was near the *Miſſiſippi*, and whom M. *de Beaujeu*'s preſence conſtrained more than it did him any ſervice, reſolved to land all his people in that place. Having taken this reſolution, on the 20th of February he ſent orders to the commander of the ſhip *La Flute* to land the heavieſt goods, and to go up into the river. He intended to be preſent at the execution of his orders; but the Marquis *de la Sablonniere*, and five or ſix Frenchmen, having been taken by the Indians as they walked in the woods, he haſtened to free them.

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He was not yet far from the ſhore, when, caſting his eye towards the bay, he ſaw the *Flute* manœuvring in ſuch a manner as to beat againſt the rocks; his bad luck, ſays *Joutel* in his relation, prevented his returning to avoid that misfortune. He continued his journey towards the Indian village, where his people had been carried to; and when he came there, he heard a cannon fired. He took this as a ſignal to give him notice, that the *Flute* was loſt; and his conjecture proved true.

Thoſe who were witneſſes to this accident plainly took it to be the effect of a premeditated deſign of M. *de St. Aigron*, who commanded that veſſel. This loſs had many diſagreeable conſequences, as it contained the ammunition utenſils, tools, and in general all that is neceſſary to a new ſettlement. M. *de la Salle* haſtened to the place where the ſhip was loſt, and found every body in a total inaction. He begged M. *de Beaujeu* to lend him his boat and canoe, which he obtained very eaſily.

He began with ſaving the crew; next he got the powder and flower, afterwards the wine and brandy; he brought on ſhore about thirty barrels: had the boat of the *Flute* been able to aſſiſt

aſſiſt that of the ſhip *Le Joli*, almoſt every thing would have been ſaved; but that was ſunk on purpoſe, and the night being come, they were obliged to defer the unlading till the next morning. Some hours being paſt, the wind, which came from the ſea, grew more violent, and the waves increaſed; the *Flute* beating againſt the rocks burſt, and a quantity of goods fell out through the opening, and were carried away by the ſea. This was only perceived at break of day; thirty more barrels of wine and brandy were ſaved, together with ſome barrels full of flower, meat, and peaſe: all the reſt was loſt.

To increaſe the misfortune, they were ſurrounded on all ſides by Indians; who, notwithſtanding the care that was taken to prevent their profiting any thing by the general confuſion, took away ſeveral things which had been preſerved from the wreck. The theft was not perceived till they were retired with the booty. They had left ſeveral of their canoes on the ſhore, which were ſeized upon: very weak repriſals indeed, which coſt much more than they were worth. The Indians came at night to take their canoes; they ſurpriſed thoſe who were left to take care of them, and, finding them aſleep, they killed two volunteers, whom M. *de la Salle* regretted

regretted very much, and wounded his nephew and another perſon.

So many misfortunes, one after another, diſguſted ſeveral perſons who were upon the expedition; and, among others, Meſſ. *Doinmaville* and *Mignet*, two engineers, who were willing to return to France, to which the diſcourſes of M. *de la Salle*'s enemies contributed greatly; for they never ceaſed to cry down his conduct, and tax his project as a ſilly and raſh undertaking. He, on the contrary, never ſhewed more reſolution and firmneſs; he conſtructed a warehouſe ſurrounded with good intrenchments; and taking it into his head, that the river, in which he was, might poſſibly be one of the branches of the *Miſſiſippi*, he prepared to go up in it.

They immediately began erecting a fort; as ſoon as the work was ſomewhat advanced, M. *de la Salle* gave *Joutel* orders to finiſh it, left him the command of it, and about one hundred men: he took the reſt of his people, about ſixty in all, with himſelf, and embarked on the river, with the reſolution of going up as high as he could. *Joutel* ſtayed but a ſhort time after him in the fort which had been begun; every night the ſavages were roving in the neighbourhood; the French defended themſelves againſt them,

them, but with loſſes that weakened them. On the 14th of July, *Joutel* received an order from M. *de la Salle* to join him with all his people.

Many good ſtout men had been killed or taken by the Indians; others were dead with fatigue, and the number of ſick increaſed every day; in a word, nothing could be more unhappy than M. *de la Salle*'s ſituation. He was devoured with grief; but he diſſimulated it pretty well, by which means his diſſimulation degenerated into a moroſe obſtinacy. As ſoon as he ſaw all his people together, he began in good earneſt to think of making a ſettlement, and fortifying it. He was the engineer of his own fort, and being always the firſt to put his hand to work, every body worked as well as he could to follow his example.

Nothing was wanting but to encourage this good-will of the people, but M. *de la Salle* had not ſufficient command of his temper. At the very time when his people ſpent their forces with working, and had but juſt as much as was abſolutely neceſſary to live upon, he could not prevail on himſelf to relax his ſeverity a little, or alter his inflexible temper, which is never ſeaſonable, and leſs ſo in a new ſettlement. It

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is not ſufficient to have courage, health, and watchfulneſs, to make any undertaking ſucceed; many other talents are requiſite. Moderation, patience, and diſintereſtedneſs, are equally neceſſary. It is uſeful to diſſimulate now and then, to prevent making evil worſe. Gentleneſs is the beſt method which every commander can follow.

M. *de la Salle* puniſhed the leaſt faults with an unheard-of cruelty; and ſeldom any word of comfort came from his mouth to thoſe who ſuffered with the greateſt conſtancy. He had of courſe the misfortune to ſee all his people fall into a ſtate of languor and deſpondency, which was more the effect of deſpair, than of exceſs of labour or ſcantineſs of good nouriſhment.

Having given his laſt orders at his fort, he reſolved to advance into the country, and began to march on the 12th of January 1687, with M. *de Cavelier* his brother, *Moranget* and the young *Cavelier* his nephews, Father *Anaſtatius* a Franciſcan friar, *Joutel*, *Duhaut*, *L'Archeveque de Marne*, a German whoſe name was *Hiens*, a ſurgeon named *Liétot*, the pilot *Teſſier*, *Saget*, and an Indian who was a good huntſman. I mention them all, becauſe they ſhall be ſpoke of in the ſequel.

As

As they advanced further into the country, they found it inhabited; and when they were but forty leagues from the nation of the *Cenis*, they heard that there was a Frenchman among thoſe Indians. It was a ſailor from Lower *Bretany*, who had loſt himſelf when M. *de la Salle* firſt came down the *Miſſiſippi*: this poor wretch lived among the *Cenis* ſince 1682, having been adopted by them. He did not hope to ſee Europe again, nothing but chance could procure him the means of returning thither: *Joutel* went to fetch him from amongſt thoſe Indians. He only quitted them to be witneſs of a crime.

The 17th of May, *Moranget* being on a hunting party, and having, as it is ſaid, abuſed with words *Duhaut*, *Hiens*, and the ſurgeon *Liétot*, thoſe three men reſolved to get rid of him as ſoon as poſſible, and to begin with the ſervant of M. *de la Salle*, and his Indian huntſman who was called *Nika*, who both accompanied *Moranget*, and could have defended him. They communicated their deſign to *L'Archeveque* and the pilot *Teſſier*, who approved of it, and deſired to take part in the execution. They did not ſpeak of it to the Sieur *de Marne*, who was with them, and whom they wiſhed to have been able to get away. The next night, whilſt the three unhappy victims whom they would ſacrifice to their revenge

revenge ſlept very quietly, *Liétot* gave each of them ſeveral blows with the hatchet on the head. The Indian and the ſervant died immediately. *Moranget* raiſed himſelf ſo as to ſit upright, without ſpeaking a word; and the murderers obliged the Sieur *de Marné* to diſpatch him, threatening to kill him too if he refuſed; thus, by making him an accomplice of their crime, they wanted to ſecure themſelves againſt his accuſing them.

The firſt crime is always followed by uneaſineſs; the greateſt villains find it difficult to conquer it: the murderers conceived, that it would not be eaſy to eſcape the juſt vengeance of M. *de la Salle*, unleſs by preventing him; and this they reſolved upon, after deliberating on the means of effecting it. They thought the ſafeſt way was to meet him, and ſurpriſe all that accompanied him, and ſo open themſelves a way for the murder which they intended to perpetrate.

So ſtrange a reſolution could only be inſpired by that blind deſpair, which hurries villains into the abyſs which they dig for themſelves: an unexpected incident became favourable to them, and delivered into their hands the prey which

they ſought for. A river that ſeparated them from the camp, and which was conſiderably increaſed ſince they paſſed it, kept them two days: this retardment, which at firſt ſeemed an obſtacle to their project, facilitated the execution of it. M. *de la Salle*, wondering that his nephew did not return, nor either of the two men that were with him, determined to go and ſeek them himſelf. It was remarked, that he was uneaſy when he was going to ſet out, and inquired with a kind of uncommon concern whether *Moranget* had quarrelled with any one.

He then called *Joutel*, and intruſted him with the command of his camp, ordering him to go his rounds in it from time to time, and to light fires, that the ſmoke might bring him on his road again, in caſe he ſhould loſe his way; he likewiſe bid him give no body leave to abſent himſelf. He ſet out on the 20th, attended by Father *Anaſtaſius* and an Indian. As he approached to the place where the aſſaſſins had ſtopt, he ſaw ſome eagles ſoaring pretty near the place, and concluded that there was ſome carrion: he fired his gun; and the conſpirators, who had not yet ſeen him, gueſſing that it was he who was coming, got their arms in readineſs. The river was between them and him: *Duhaut*

and

and *L'Archeveque* croſſed it; and ſeeing M. *de la Salle* advancing ſlowly, they ſtopped. *Duhaut* hid himſelf in the long graſs, with his gun cocked, *L'Archeveque* advanced a little more: and a moment after, M. *de la Salle* knowing him, aſked him where his nephew was? He anſwered, that he was lower down. At the ſame inſtant *Duhaut* fired; M. *de la Salle* received the ſhot in his head, and fell down dead.

It was the 20th of May 1687 that this murder was committed near the *Cenis*. Father *Anaſtaſius*, ſeeing M. *de la Salle* drop down at his feet, expected that the murderers would not ſpare him, though they ſhould have no other view in it than to get rid of a witneſs of their crime. *Duhaut* came near him to quiet him, and told him, that what they had done was an act of deſpair, and that they had long thought of revenging themſelves on *Moranget*, who had endeavoured to ruin them. Father *Anaſtaſius* informed M. *Cavelier* of his brother's death; that gentlemen told them, that if it was their intention to kill him likewiſe, he would forgive them his death before hand, and he only demanded, as a favour, a quarter of an hour to prepare himſelf for death. They replied, that he had nothing to fear, and that nobody complained of him.

Joutel was not then in the camp; *L'Archeveque*, who was his friend, ran to inform him, that his death was certain if he ſhewed any reſentment of what had happened, or if he pretended to take advantage of the authority with which M. *de la Salle* had inveſted him. *Joutel*, who was of a very gentle temper, anſwered, that they ſhould be content with his conduct, and that he believed that they ought to be pleaſed with the manner in which he had hitherto behaved; and then he returned to the camp.

As ſoon as *Duhaut* ſaw *Joutel*, he called out to him, that every one ſhould command by turns. He had already taken all the authority into his hands; and the firſt uſe he made of it, was to make himſelf maſter of the magazine. He divided it afterwards with *L'Archeveque*, ſaying, that every thing belonged to him. There were about thirty thouſand livres worth of goods, and near twenty-five thouſand livres both in coin and in plate.

The aſſaſſins had force and boldneſs on their ſide; they had ſhewn themſeves capable of the greateſt crimes, accordingly they met with no reſiſtance at firſt. They ſoon divided, and quarrelled among themſelves; they found difficulties

ties in dividing the treaſure; they came to blows, and *Hiens* fired his piſtol at *Duhaut*'s head, who reeled, and fell four yards from the place where he ſtood. At the ſame time *Rutel* the ſailor, whom *Joutel* fetched from the *Cenis*, fired a gun at *Liétot*. That wretch lived yet ſeveral hours, though he had three balls in his body; ſo the two aſſaſſins, one of M. *de la Salle*, and the other of his nephew *Moranget*, were themſelves the victims of that ſpirit of fury, which they had inſpired to this unhappy colony.

The Indians knew not what to think of theſe murderers; they were quite ſcandalized by them. They were in the right, and could with more reaſon treat thoſe Frenchmen as barbarians, than we had to conſider them as ſuch. Be that as it will, ſuch was the tragic death of *Robert Cavelier, Sieur de la Salle*, a man of abilities, of a great extent of genius, and of a courage and firmneſs of mind which might have carried him to ſomething very great, if, with theſe good qualities, he had known how to get the better of his ſullen, moroſe mind, to ſoften his ſeverity, or rather the roughneſs of his temper, and check the haughtineſs with which he treated not only thoſe who depended entirely upon himſelf, but even his aſſociates. The moſt unhappy thing

for the memory of this famous man is, that he has not been pitied by any body, and that the bad ſucceſs that has attended his undertakings has given him the appearance of an adventurer among thoſe who only judge from appearances. Unhappily they are commonly the greateſt number, and their voice is, in a manner, the voice of the people. He has further been reproached with never taking advice from any body, and with having ruined his private affairs by his obſtinacy *.

Thus ended this unlucky undertaking; many things conſpired to make it abortive: it would at leaſt have had part of the wiſhed-for ſucceſs, if a ſettlement on the mouth of the Miſſiſippi had been the only thing in view, as many people thought it was. It is certain, that when M. *de Beaujeu* abandoned M. *de la Salle* in St. *Bernard's Bay*, the latter ſoon found out, that he was to the

* In order to diminiſh the villainy of the deed of *Duhaut*, it has been ſpread, that M. *de la Salle* had killed young *Duhaut* with his own hands, and that he had treated ſeveral others in the ſame manner; that it was deſpair and revenge that animated the conſpirators, who feared to periſh themſelves by his injuſtice and ſeverity. One ought to be ſo much the more upon one's guard againſt ſuch calumniating diſcourſes, as it is but too common to increaſe the faults of the unhappy, and to attribute to them even thoſe which they really have not.

the westward of the river he sought for; if it had been his intention to find it, he might on his first journey to the *Cenis* have obtained guides from those Indians, because they granted some in the sequel to *Joutel* *; but he wished to come near the Spaniards, in order to take cognizance of the mines of *St. Barbara*, and to seek likewise a *Dorado*. By endeavouring to do too much, he not only did nothing at all, but made all his people perish, and perished himself, and was pitied by nobody.

Before I conclude this letter, let me add some reflections on the folly of men.

The avidity of the Spanish captains must have been very great, as it engaged them to seek for an imaginary *Dorado* or mountain of gold, whilst the whole country they were in abounded in all

* The Sieur *Joutel* found the *Mississippi* by means of the Indians, who brought him to the *Akanzas*, and from thence into *Canada*, ; where he arrived, accompanied by one priest, a Recollet friar, a soldier, a sailor, a coloniſt, and an Indian, who composed a strange sort of caravan. They were all that returned from this expedition. The remains of this unhappy colony perished either through the Indians or through the Spaniards, who took them prisoners, and set them at work in their mines.

parts with that metal. This is a proof, that all the treaſures in the world are incapable of ſatisfying man, as ſoon as avidity has once gained the empire in his heart.

The Spaniards were not contented with the riches of *Peru*; they muſt ſtill go to diſcover a *Dorado*, that is, a country where the rocks and ſtones are all of gold. The Indians, in order to flatter the avidity of their enemies, and at the ſame time to get them out of their country, never ceaſed amuſing them with accounts of the gold, ſilver, diamonds, and pearls with which that country abounded. Their deſire of getting rid of their unwelcome gueſts, induced them to ſpare nothing towards perſuading them of the exiſtence of this pretended country. The Spaniards believed theſe accounts, in which they were intereſted; and this is ſaid to be the origin of the famous *Dorado*, which has made ſo much noiſe in the world.

The report was current, that, after paſſing a long chain of mountains covered with ſnow, one entered upon a vaſt plain exceedingly well peopled, in which was the *Dorado* that every one wiſhed to diſcover.

Queſada,

Queſada, with two hundred and fifty brave ſoldiers, ſet out immediately in ſearch of it. On *St. James*'s day they perceived, from the top of a mountain, ſome vaſt plains which reſembled a ſea; and when they were deſcended to the foot of the mountain, they built there a town, and called it *San-Yago*, in remembrance of the day on which they diſcovered the plain; they likewiſe ſurnamed it *Las Atalayas* *, in order to point out the deſign of their journey, which was to diſcover the *Dorado*. This town exiſts ſtill in the place, which is marked in the maps as a monument which ſeems to engage poſterity to go out upon the diſcovery of this unknown treaſure. *Queſada* paſſed through the woods of *Ayrico* with exceſſive trouble, and arrived at *Timana* in 1543, having loſt almoſt all his people.

Orellana undertook the ſame voyage in that year; he ſet out from *Peru*, deſcended the river *Maragnon* or of the Amazons, came to the coaſt, and neglected nothing towards arriving at the mountain of gold; but all his pains were uſeleſs, and he gained no more honour by the under-

* *Atalayar* ſignifies to diſcover, or to ſpy, in Spaniſh: *Atalaya*, a tower or fort from whence one diſcovers: *Las Atalayas* is the plural.

undertaking than that of having completed one of the moſt horrible voyages that ever were heard of. About the ſame time *Philip de Ure*, fearing that *Queſada* would profit alone by this diſcovery, ſet out from *Coro* in the province of *Venézuela*, together with *Aquito*, the Lieutenant *Velalcazar*, and one hundred and twenty men; but a *Cacique* having told him, that moſt of the people of *Queſada* had periſhed in the undertaking, he went to the ſouthward along the river *Guabari*, and ſtopped, as Father *Simon* and Father *Piedrahata* aſſure us, at the firſt ſettlement of *Omaguas*, in a very bad plight. But what will not men undertake for the ſake of gold! *Auri ſacra fames, quid non mortalia pectora cogis* *?

But to what purpoſe is all this philoſophy.—The ſtay which I intend to make here, will enable me to ſend you a new letter on the ſubject of the moſt intereſting particulars of the politics and form of government of the nations who inhabit this country. I am,

SIR, &c.

At the Akanzas,
Oct. 29. 1751.

* Here follows a dull quotation from a Spaniſh author upon this ſubject, which we thought proper to omit. F.

LETTER V.

To the same.

Description of the Manners of the Nation of Akanzas, *their Religion and Manner of carrying on War; the Goodness and Fertility of their Country.*

SIR,

I Hope the description I shall give of this Indian nation, by drawing your attention upon their particular character, will convey a general idea of all the nations of North America. There is indeed very little difference among them, in regard to their customs and their way of thinking, and especially in regard to a Supreme Being, which in their language they call *Coyocopchill*, which signifies *the great Spirit*, or the *Master of life*.

The

The *Akanzas* live on the banks of a river that bears their name; it ariſes in *New Mexico*, and falls into the *Miſſiſippi*. Theſe Indians are tall, well made, brave, good ſwimmers, very expert in hunting and fiſhing, and entirely devoted to the French, of which they have given marks on ſeveral occaſions.

I ſpoke, in my preceding letter, of an old man of this nation, who ſaid he had ſeen M. *de la Salle*. This good Indian added, that from that time he conceived a very great eſteem for the French; that they were the firſt nation of white men he had ſeen, and ſince that time he had always recommended it to his nation, whoſe chief he was, never to receive any other European allies than the French, who were immediately received at his requeſt: in reality theſe people never would have any thing to do with the conjuration of the general maſſacre of the French colony at the *Natches*. I muſt do theſe good Indians that juſtice; they are always at war with the *Tchicachas* (Chickſaws) who gave the *Natches* a retreat.

The country of the *Akanzas* is one of the fineſt in the world; the ſoil of it is ſo fertile, that it produces, without any culture, European wheat,

wheat, all kinds of food, and good fruit, unknown in *France*; game of all kinds is plentiful there; wild oxen *, ſtags, roebucks, bears, tygers,

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* The here enumerated animals, we intend to make better known, by adding the names in Dr. Linnæus Syſt. Nat. and Mr. Pennant's Syn. of Quadr. or his Britiſh Zoology.

1. WILD OXEN. Bos Biſon, *Linn.* American ox, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 8.

2. STAGS. Cervus Elaphus, *Linn.* Stag deer, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 49.

3. ROEBUCKS. As it is dubious whether this ſpecies is in *North America*, this is probably the Dama Virginiana, *Ray. Syn. Quad.* 86,; or Virginian deer, *Penn. Syn. Quadrup.* 51.

4. BEARS. Urſus Arctos, *Linn.* Black bear, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 190.

5. TYGERS. There are no true tygers in all the new continent, and what is called thus muſt be the Cugacurana of *Marcgrave*, and *Ray. Syn. Quad.* 169. or Brown cat, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 179.

6. LEOPARDS. Felis Pardus, *Linn.* Panther, *Penn. Syn. Quad*, p. 171. note. Mr. Pennant has proved, from very good authorities, that this ſpecies is found in America, contrary to what M. *de Buffon* ſays; who, though a very great naturaliſt, by far ſuperior to many who make free with

tygers, leopards, foxes, wild cats, rabbets, turkies, grous, pheaſants, partridges, quails, turtles, wood-pigeons, ſwans, geeſe, buſtards, ducks

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with him, is however a man who never departs from an opinion which he once has embraced, and which he will carry by his eloquence in ſpite of the moſt creditable authorities to the contrary.

7. Foxes. Canis Vulpes, *Linn.* Fox, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 152. with all its varieties, the croſs fox, the black fox, and the brand fox.

8. Wild Cats. Felis ſilveſtris tigrina, *Briſſon. Quad.* 193. Cayenne Cat, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 182.

9. Rabbets. There were originally no rabbets in America, but they were imported by the Spaniards, and are now greatly increaſed; whether theſe, here called rabbets, on the river *Miſſiſippi*, are the true rabbets, or whether they are that kind of hare which is peculiar to North America, cannot be decided. The North American hare ſeems to be the Alpine hare, *Penn. Syn. Quad.* 249; it is leſs in ſize than the European common hare, and a medium between hare and rabbet, according to Kalm's *North Amer.* I. p. 105.

10. Turkies. Meleagris Gallopavo, *Linn.* Le dindon, *Planches enluminées*, 97.

11. Grous. There are about ſeven different kinds of grous in *North America*.

(a) Tetrao

ducks of all kinds, teals, divers, ſnipes, water-hens, golden plovers, ſtares, thruſhes, and other birds which are not known in Europe.

On

(*a*) Tetrao Phaſianellus, *Linn.* The long-tailed grous, *Edward*, 117.

(*b*) —— Canadenſis, *Linn.* The ſpotted grous, *Edw.* 71.

(*c*) —— Lagopus, *Linn.* The white grous, *Edw.* 72. *Pl. enl.* 129.

(*d*) —— Cupido, *Linn.* The pinnated grous, *Cat.* III. 1.

(*e*) —— Umbellus, *Linn.* The ruffed grous, *Edw.* 248.

(*f*) —— Canace, *Linn.* The ſtriated grous, *Pl. enl.* 131. & 132. *Briſſ.* I. 203. t. 20. f. 1. 2.

(*g*) —— Togatus, *Linn.* The ſhoulder-knot grous, *Pl. enl.* 104. *Briſſ.* I. 207. t. 221. f. 1.

Which of theſe are found ſo far ſouth as *Louiſiana* cannot be determined.

12. PHEASANTS. This is ſo vague a denomination, that it is next to impoſſible to find out which kind of pheaſant the author means; for there is but one pheaſant in *America*, in *Cayenne*, and *Guiana*, and therefore it is dubious whether this bird is found ſo far north as *Louiſiana*: I am therefore inclined to believe, the author meant the *long-tailed grous*, which bears a great ſimilarity to a pheaſant, and is found as far as *Virginia*, which is not above three or four degrees more north than the *Akanzas*.

13. PARTRIDGES. This ſeems to be the American partridge, *Cat.* III. 12. Tetrao Virginianus, *Linn.*

14. QUAILS.

On my arrival at the *Akanzas*, the young warriors received me with the dance of the calumet. It is neceſſary that I ſhould inform you, that

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14. QUAILS. Tetrao Mexicanus, *Linn.* Louſiana quail, *Pl. enl.* 149.

15. TURTLES. Columba Canadenſis, *Linn.* Canada turtle, *Pl. enl.* 176.

16. WOOD-PIGEONS. Columba migratoria, *Linn.* Migratory pigeon. *Kalm*, II. p. 82. *t.* 2. Columba Carolinenſis, *Linn.* Caroline pigeon, *Cat.* I. 24.

17. SWANS. Anas Cygnus, *Linn. Br. Zool.* p. 440. *Edward* 150.

18. GEESE. Anas Anſer, *Linn.* Wild gooſe, *Br. Zool.* 447. Anas crythropus, *Linn.* White fronted gooſe, *Br. Zool.* 450. *Edw.* 153. Anas Canadenſis, *Linn.* Canada gooſe, *Edw.* 151. *Pl. enl.* 346.

19. BUSTARDS, Otis Tarda, *Linn.* This is the firſt time that I find a buſtard mentioned among the American birds. As they are not uncommon in France, I am inclined to think the author's account to be true; and as he has already mentioned the turkies before, it is not likely that he ſhould confound the buſtard and turkey.

20. DUCKS of all kinds. There are at leaſt twenty kinds of ducks known to be in America. Vid. *Forſter's Catalogue of North American animals*, p. 16. 17.

21. TEALS.

that dancing enters into all ſorts of tranſactions with theſe nations; they have religious, phyſical, merry, ceremonious, warlike, pacific, nuptial, funeral, playful, hunting, and lewd dances: the laſt is aboliſhed ſince our arrival in America.

The dance of impudicity was performed privately and in night-time, by the light of a great fire. All that entered into the laſcivious aſſembly,

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21. TEALS. I ſuppoſe the author means by teals the leſſer kinds of ducks, as the harlequin, pied, brown, white-faced, blue-wing, &c. and common teal.

22. DIVERS are of four kinds in North America. Vid. *Forſter's Cat. N. Amer.* 16.

23. SNIPES. There are likewiſe ſeveral birds of this kind in *North America*; ſo that without a more detailed denomination, it is impoſſible to determine the ſpecies.

24. WATER-HENS. Of this kind is the Rallus Carolinenſis, *Linn.* the Carolina rail, and the common water-hen, or Fulica chloropus, *Linn.* in N. Amer.

25. GOLDEN PLOVERS. Charadrius apricarius, *Linn. Edw.* 140.

26. STARES. Sturnus Ludovicianus, *Linn. Pl. enl.* 256. *Briſſ.* II. 449. t. 42. f. 1. *Cat.* I. 13. This bird has miſtakenly appeared in the books of the modern ornithologiſts

bly were obliged to *ſtrike againſt the poſt* *, that is, to ſwear that they never would reveal what they had ſeen or done in this diſſolute ball: the dancers of both ſexes appeared quite naked there, in attitudes and geſtures of proſtitution, accompanied with ſongs of the ſame kind, which you muſt excuſe my tranſcribing, though, in the language of the Indians, they are purely pieces of genteel wit.

The *Akanzas* have expert fellows among them, who would perhaps amaze our jugglers. I ſaw

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under two names: *Briſſon* calls it, in II. 242. an American ouzel; and II. 449. he repreſents it as a Louiſiana ſtare. *Linnæus* makes likewiſe two birds of it; he calls it a lark, p. 289. Alauda magna, and p. 290. a ſtare, Sturnus Ludovicianus; but, upon compariſon, it may be eaſily determined, that both are but a ſtare, and that it ought to be eraſed from among the *Larks* and *Ouzels*.

27. THRUSHES. There are at leaſt ſeven *North American* thruſhes, which of them are upon the river *Miſſiſippi* cannot be determined for want of information, F.

* Whenever the Indians ſwear or take oaths, they take a club with which they ſtrike againſt a poſt, calling to mind their fine actions in war, and promiſing to keep their word religiouſly: an oath of this nature is irrevocable among them: every Cacique ſwears to lead his nation well, and ſtrikes the poſt; without taking that oath, he cannot be inſtalled in the dignity.

I saw one of them, who, in my presence, performed a trick which will appear incredible to you; after some wry mouths, he swallowed a rib of a stag seventeen inches long, held it with his fingers, and drew it out of his stomach again. He went to *New Orleans* to shew his agility to the governor and the officers of the garrison; this the Indians call acting the physician.

The *Akanzas* declare war with the following ceremonies. They make a feast in the hut of the chief, where dog's flesh is served up, which is the principal food of warriors; because they say, that a creature which is so brave as to be killed in the defence of his master, must give them valour. He that kills one of the enemy's dogs is likewise received as a warrior; but he must bring the scalp of the dog, that is, the skin from the head, as if it were the scalp of a man, without which the others would not believe him. The Indians have dogs in great numbers, both for hunting, and to secure them from being surprised by the enemies.

After the feast of which I have spoken, the great chief calls together an assembly of warriors.

The assembly is held in the middle of the village, in a great hut made on purpose, which they call the hut of the council. The chief and most considerable men place themselves, according to their respective ranks, on mats or on tyger-skins. When they are all seated, the chief or orator puts himself into the midst of the assembly, and holds his speech with a loud voice: he represents to his nation, that it would be a shame for them not to revenge the affront they received from such or such a nation; that if they did take them to account for it, they would for the future be looked upon as women *. At that instant all the assembly applauds, by saying, *Heu! heu!* The chief then takes a bundle of rods, and presents it to the assembly; all that are desirous of going to war take one of the rods, and by this means they are enlisted.

The next morning the women run through the village, crying, "Young men and warriors, "who received the rods, set out, go to war, re- "venge the deaths of our relations, allies, and "friends;

* When an Indian is called a *woman* or an *old woman*, it is an affront, which signifies a man without courage, a coward.

"friends; and do not return till you are ſtained "with the blood of our enemies, and bring with "you their ſcalps *."

Then a young Indian takes the trouble to paint red a club, which they call a *head-breaker*; this club is brought upon the limits of the enemies country; there they cut a piece out of a tree, and with vermilion they draw on it two arrows acroſs each other, which is their ſymbol of war: the red colour ſignifies, that the nation deſires revenge, and will not be ſatisfied till it has ſhed the blood of their enemies.

Before they ſet out, the chief of the nation calls another aſſembly, which is generally followed by a feaſt, to which he invites his allies. The chief preſents the confederates with rods, to engage them to march with them as auxiliary troops. At the end of the repaſt they ſing and

* The Indians are uſed to pluck the ſkins from their enemies heads whom they kill in battle; they count the number of the ſlain by theſe ſcalps, which they bring home like trophies on poles. We generally give them, in goods, for the King's account, the value of ten crowns (écus) for each ſcalp of our enemies.

dance the dance of war *. All the young men are painted red; it is really curious to see them dance. He that expresses by dance the discovery or the surprise, watches his enemy, keeping in a stooping posture; all at once he falls upon him, his club in hand, making horrible cries, as is done in a real action. His comrade drops as if he were thunderstruck, stiffening all his muscles as an epileptic; after which the other represents, dancing, the method of scalping the dead enemy; this is done with a knife which he has in his hand, he makes an incision on the forehead, and round the neck of his enemy; he places his long nails therein, he puts both his knees against the shoulders of the captive, and with a sudden push with his knees and pull with his hands, he takes up the skin with the hair on it, from the head. All this is represented in singing and dancing to the tune of a drum and a *chi-*

* The song of war is conceived in the following terms: "I go to war to avenge the death of my brothers; I shall "kill, I shall exterminate, I shall plunder, I shall burn my "enemies: I shall bring away slaves, I shall devour their "heart, dry their flesh, drink their blood; I shall bring "their scalps, and make cups of their sculls;" and more such expressions, which are full of cruelty, and shew a thirst after revenge and slaughter.

a *chichikois* *, which marks the time and the cadence.

The Indians never go to war without conſulting their *Manitou* †, to whom they attribute all their good or bad luck. If the *Manitou* has not been favourable to them, they quit him without any ceremony, and take another. The chief, before he goes to war, undergoes a very rigid faſting, and paints his body black during that time. After the faſt, he waſhes himſelf, and paints his body and his face red. He harangues his warriors before the falſe deity, after which every one prepares his baggage. Sometimes they go to war four or five hundred leagues from their own country.

Their baggage, in time of war, conſiſts of a bear's ſkin, which ſerves as a bed; a wild ox's ſkin, with which they cover themſelves; a tyger-cat's ſkin, which ſerves as a ſack to put the calumet or tobacco-pipe in; a *head-breaker* or

* This is a gourd in which they put a kind of little beads, they likewiſe faſten ſuch beads to their feet.

† Falſe Indian deity; ſometimes a dried raven or a ſnake; they likewiſe employ for that purpoſe amphibious creatures and quadrupeds.

club; and a little hatchet, which they make uſe of in order to make huts in the woods.

Their arms conſiſt of a gun or muſket, the horn of an ox to put the gun-powder in, which they hang round the body with a ſtring, together with a little bag in which they put their balls, the flint, and a ſcrew; beſides this, a bow and a quiver full of arrows; the latter are very uſeful for hunting. They never employ their fire-arms at any animals, when they are upon any expedition againſt their enemies, leſt the noiſe might ſerve to diſcover them. They agree amongſt themſelves upon the method of ſurpriſing their enemies; for the Indians place all their glory in the knowledge of this kind of war, which is generally fatal to thoſe who are the object of it.

They take very little care with regard to victuals; every one has a little bag of flour of Indian corn or maize, roaſted as we do coffee, and when he is hungry he takes a ſpoonful of water in which ſome of this flour or meal is diluted, which he keeps till they are very near the enemy.

Though

Though the Indians are ſometimes three or four days without eating, they are not ill at all from it, but continue their road as before: they contract their girdle round their belly, in proportion as it grows more empty, and diminiſhes in ſize; in a word, they are indefatigable.

When the Indians have made a ſtroke at the enemy, as they term it, ſome young warriors immediately ſet out, to bring the news of the victory to the village. They make their arrival known, by ſome cries, which mark the number of priſoners, that of the dead, and that of the ſcalps which they bring with them. The women prepare to receive the priſoners, and to give them a hearty drubbing with ſticks. They have likewiſe a right to decide who of the captives ſhall die, for they are brought before them with their hands tied, and painted black *. Thoſe women who have loſt their huſbands, or ſons, are at liberty to take captives to replace them. They can adopt them as huſbands or as ſons, and they are then immediately ſet free.

Thoſe who are not adopted muſt be burnt at a ſlow fire: to that purpoſe their head is ſcalped,

* Thoſe who are thus painted are to be burnt in the midſt of the village, unleſs the women adopt them.

ed, and they are faſtened to two poſts which are driven into the ground, with a piece of wood lying acroſs them *; then all the young people exerciſe their fury upon them, and they endure the greateſt torments without complaining; on the contrary, they ſing till they expire, ſaying that they are true men, and that they fear neither fire nor death; they laugh at their tormentors, and tell them that they do not make them ſuffer enough; that if they were in their hands they would plague them much worſe; that the fire muſt be applied to ſuch and ſuch parts, and that they are there the moſt ſenſible to pain. It is to be remarked, that when they diſpoſe themſelves to march againſt their enemies, they take care to paint their bodies red; ſo that, when they attack the enemy, with ſuch howls as if they were bewitched, they really look like a troop of devils let looſe from hell †. They are good towards their friends, but very cruel towards their enemies.

As

* The captives are obliged to ſing and dance round theſe poſts.

† The Indians in general, both men and women, have no hair on their bodies, beſides thoſe on the head; they ſay, that in this particular we reſemble the beaſts, and they ſay the ſame when they ſee us eat herbs and ſallad.

As to religion, they believe the exiſtence of a great Spirit, whom they adore under the form of a ſerpent or a crocodile; they give him a kind of divine ſervice. They fear the devil, whom they call a bad ſpirit. They likewiſe adore the ſun and moon. When it thunders, they imagine that the *Lord of life* ſpeaks to them in an angry tone.

I muſt not cloſe my letter without informing you of a ſingular event, which, though of very little importance, may however be very uſeful to me, during my ſtay in *America*. The *Akanzas* have adopted me; they have acknowledged me as a warrior and a chief, and have given me the mark of it, which is the figure of a roe-buck imprinted on my thigh. I have willingly undergone this painful operation, which was performed in the following manner: I was ſeated on a tyger's ſkin; an Indian burnt ſome ſtraw, the aſhes of which he diluted with water: he made uſe of this ſimple mixture to draw the roe-buck; he then followed the drawing with great needles, pricking them deep into the fleſh, till the blood comes out; this blood mixing with the aſhes of the ſtraw, forms a figure which can never be effaced. I ſmoked the calumet after that; they ſpread white ſkins under my feet;

on

on which I walked; they danced before me crying out for joy; they told me afterwards, that I could go to all the people who were their allies, preſent the calumet, and ſhew my mark, and I would be well received; that I was their brother, and that if any one killed me, they would kill him; now I am a noble *Akanza*. Theſe people think they have done me all the honour due to a defender of their country, by thus adopting me: and I regard this honour almoſt like that which the *Marſhal de Richelieu* received, when his name was inſcribed in the golden book at *Genoa* among the noble Genoeſe. It is true, there is ſome difference between an inſcription and the operation I have undergone; I cannot expreſs it to you how much I have ſuffered by it; I did all I could to prevent ſhewing how much I was affected; on the contrary, I joked with the Indian women that were preſent; and all the ſpectators, amazed at my inſenſibility, cried out for joy, and danced round about me, ſaying, I was a true man. The pain has been very violent, and I have had the fever from it for a week together. You cannot believe how fond the *Akanzas* are of me ſince that time. This is all I had to ſay upon this ſubject: ſome time this month we intend to continue our journey to the *Illinois*. As the ſeaſon is much advanced,

vanced, and we have yet three hundred leagues to go, we run the risk of being stopped by the ice, and of wintering on the road. We have been obliged to stop here for preparing the biscuit necessary for so long a voyage; for in this season we must combat both the current and the north wind. According to all appearances, I shall not be able to write before next year. This letter sets out by a boat, which will arrive in time before the departure of a man of war for *France*, where I hope my letter will find you in good health. I beg you would let me hear from you; for I assure you, you can do me no greater pleasure.

I am, &c.

At the Akanzas, the 6th of November 1751.

P. S. I found a Mestizo Indian among the *Akanzas*; and, upon questioning him concerning his origin, I heard that he was the son of *Rutel*, that sailor from *Bretany* who lost himself, when M. *de la Salle* came down the *Mississippi* in 1682, and of whom I have had the honour of speaking before.

This

This demi-Indian added, that *Rutel* his father was found by the *Cenis*, an Indian nation, who adopted him; he received one of their girls as his wife, in the quality of a warrior; becauſe, having made uſe of his muſket in a battle againſt ſome enemies of the *Cenis*, the exploſion of that weapon, which was as yet unknown to them, frightened them, and put them to flight.

This *Rutel* having afterwards taught the Indians the method of going with oars and ſails in their canoes and piraguas, he enabled them to defeat a little fleet of their enemies; this manner of navigating being till then unknown to the nation, and drew their gratitude and veneration upon him; they revered him as the greateſt man in the world; and the famous *Ruiter*, who, from a common ſailor, became Lieutenant and Admiral of the United Provinces, was perhaps leſs revered than *Rutel* was among the *Cenis*.

LETTER VI.

To the ſame.

An Account of the Author's Navigation from the Akanzas *to the* Illinois. *The King's Boat St. Louis, on which the Author was, is overſet; he falls into the* Miſſiſippi, *and an* Akanza *ſaves his life.*

SIR,

I AM now, thank God, arrived at Fort *Chartres*, after running many riſks on this long and troubleſome voyage. We ſet out from the *Akanzas* the 7th of November, on our voyage hither. We have gone three hundred leagues without meeting with any village or habitation. As this extent of country is abſolutely uninhabited, there are happily great flocks of wild oxen, ſtags, and roe-bucks, to be met with, eſpecially in this ſeaſon when the waters

ters are low. Theſe animals are obliged to come in flocks to the river to drink, we often killed them as they croſſed it, and likewiſe ſome bears were thus got. The *Akanza* Indians generally come to hire themſelves to the French, in order to make them ſubſiſt by hunting upon the road. Theſe hunters ſet out in the morning in piraguas; they kill the oxen which they meet on the banks of the river, and the boats that follow after them take on board the meat, which lies ready for them on the ſhore.

The Indians take care to keep the tongue, and the fleſh from the back of the animals which they have killed, and to preſent theſe bits to the commander and officers of the convoy; after which a ſerjeant or a corporal diſtributes the fleſh to the ſoldiers in each boat: the pleaſure of hunting amply repays for the fatigues of the voyage. The game is ſo common in the neighbourhood of the river *St. François* *, that, when we went on ſhore in thoſe parts, it was impoſſible to ſleep, on account of the multitudes of ſwans, cranes, geeſe, buſtards, and ducks, that were continually going up and down in theſe watery places. On approaching the country of the *Illinois*,

* This river comes from the country of the *Hautaux*.

Illinois, you see, in the day-time, whole clouds of turtle-doves or wood-pigeons. A circumstance that will perhaps be incredible, is, that they often eclipse the sun; these birds, living merely upon acorns and the seeds of beech-trees, in the woods, are excellent in autumn; sometimes eighty of them are killed at one shot. What a pity that so fine a country is not inhabited, or is only inhabited by brutes!

M. *de Macarty*, an Irishman, and commander of the convoy, having had some fits of the gout, and fearing to be obliged to winter on the road, resolved to go before the rest, when we were at the juncture of the *Ohio* with the *Mississippi*, thirty leagues from the *Illinois*. He took the best rowers out of all the boats, and put them on board his boat, and, without troubling himself about the others, he left them behind, contrary to M. *de Vaudreuil*'s injunctions; however, the law of nature dictates to every body the order of assisting others mutually, in case of an attack from an enemy, or some other accident, such as happened to the boat *St. Louis*, on board of which I was. It got upon a sand-bank, and they were obliged to unload it almost entirely before they could set it a-float again, which made

me loſe two days, and prevented my joining the convoy again.

To increaſe my misfortunes, when I was but fourteen leagues from the *Illinois*, my boat, three days after it was ſtranded, ran againſt a tree, of which the *Miſſiſippi* is full, and eſpecially in time of low water; the ſhock burſt the boat, and ſuch a quantity of water got in, that it ſunk in leſs than an hour's time. By this accident I loſt all I had: I ran the riſk of periſhing too; for I had thrown myſelf into a piragua, but it was ſo full of goods ſaved from the wreck, that it overſet; ſeveral ſoldiers were drowned, and I ſhould have ſhared the ſame fate, had it not been for a generous *Akanza*, who, not fearing the ſeverity of the ſeaſon, leapt into the water, and ſeized me by my riding-coat.

After theſe adventures I am at laſt arrived at Fort *Chartres*: I had not been long here, when I was witneſs to an event which might have had very unhappy conſequences. The *Pehenguichias* and the *Ouyatanons* had agreed upon the total ruin of five French villages among the *Illinois*. M. *de Macarty* had ſent me before-hand to prepare quarters for ſome troops that came in a con-

a convoy. The Indians had meditated their enterprise, and intended to come before the convoy. I was then at the *Kaskakias*, where M. *de Montcharvaux* commanded, who could not justly know the whole extent of the plot of those barbarians. These were spread in the houses of the inhabitants; by their caresses, their affectation, and calling to mind the massacre of the Natches, we suspected their design.

On such occasions as these, an officer feels all the weight of the command. M. *de Montcharvaux* was not discouraged; he was seconded by M. *de Gruise*, an intelligent, brave officer. He held a council with the oldest and most considerable people of the place; and did me the honour to consult me in this circumstance: it was more through his goodness than through necessity, because I was newly arrived, and consequently little acquainted with the situation of affairs in that neighbourhood. I will however venture to say, that he was pleased with the advice I gave, though it was a very simple one. My opinion was, that, in order to penetrate the design of these Indians, we should keep on the defensive, without shewing the least suspicion: that we should send out some armed inhabitants on horseback, as if they went a-hunting; recom-

mending it to them, that, after they had gone the rounds, they ſhould return into the village full gallop, as if ſomething had happened to them: this was to give a falſe alarm. There remained nothing further to be done in that caſe, but to examine the countenances of the Indians, who would certainly betray themſelves. This advice was followed; the Indians believed the French had diſcovered their plot; they intended to execute it on Chriſtmas-day, when the people came from the great maſs; they had exactly inquired after that day, aſking, in their way, when that day came on which the Son of the great Spirit came into the world.

As ſoon as they believed they were diſcovered, they thought only of making their eſcape; we fired upon them, and killed twenty-two on the ſpot. A ſerjeant, called *La Jeuneſſe*, a Creole, and a good hunter, killed four in my preſence. M. *de Gruiſe*, on his ſide, attacked thoſe who were in the Jeſuits houſe, he wounded ſeveral of them, and took five alive, among whom there was one *Illinois*; they were put in irons.

M. *de Macarty* haſtened to diſpatch meſſengers to *New Orleans* to the Marquis *de Vaudreuil*, to give him an account of this expedition; the governor

vernor ſent back orders to deliver the priſoners to their countrymen, who came crying, the calumet in hand, and diſavowed the plot, ſaying their people had loſt their ſenſes, and that the Engliſh had taken their ſenſes from them. They received peace very thankfully, and all is quiet at preſent; however, for precaution's ſake, the inhabitants have received orders to carry their muſkets when they go to maſs; and the officer of the guard to place two ſentinels at the church-door during divine ſervice.

I muſt not forget to mention to you, Sir, that all this paſſed without our having a ſingle man killed or wounded. The Indians threw away their cloaths and their clubs to run the better; the vigilance of M. *de Montcharvaux* the commandant, and of M. *de Gruiſe* the major, has prevented the conſpiracy, at the moment when the plot was to be executed. I am now returned to Fort *Chartres*, where we lead a pretty peaceable life; I cannot ſend any great news, but I will communicate ſome little anecdotes which may amuſe you, and will at leaſt give you an idea of our Indians.

I had hired an Indian for my hunter during winter; he belonged to the village of the *Mit-*

chigamias; one day having got a very great quantity of game, inſtead of bringing it to me, he went to treat * with ſome Frenchmen, who gave him brandy in exchange, of which he drank ſo much as to loſe the uſe of his reaſon. As he entered my lodgings in this condition, I received him very ill; I took away the muſket which I had given him, and turned him off by puſhing him out of doors: he came, however, into my kitchen againſt my will, lay down in it, and would not go out of it. As ſoon as he was in his ſenſes again, he well conceived what a great fault he had committed; and, being willing to atone for it, he took a gun, powder, and ſhot, and went out. The next day he returns, and comes in, very haughtily, loaded with game: he had round his naked body a girdle, between which all the heads of the wild fowls were put; he looſened it, and threw them into the middle of my room; he then ſat down near my fire, without ſpeaking; he lighted his calumet, and giving it me to ſmoke out of it, he ſaid, "I own I had loſt my "ſenſes yeſterday, but I have found them again: "I ac-

* They call *treating*, the exchange or barter of European merchandize againſt the furs which the Indians take in hunting.

"I acknowledge my fault; and I beg thee to "excuſe it. I agree that I had deſerved the "treatment I received, being turned out of thy "hut; thou haſt done well to let me come in "again, becauſe, if the other Indians had heard "of it, they would at the leaſt diſpute reproach "me with having been turned out of the hut of "the chief *Great Noſe* *."

Many Europeans make no difference between the Indians and brutes, imagining that they have neither reaſon nor common ſenſe. However, the circumſtance which I have now related, and a great many more, ſufficiently ſhew, that theſe people are ſuſceptible of ſentiments of honour; they know how to do themſelves juſtice when they are wronged, and know very well when they do ill. There are nations among the Europeans, of whom one may remark as ridiculous and barbarous cuſtoms as among the American Indians.

To return to my hunter: you know very well, that drunkenneſs debaſes men to the rank

* An epithet the Indians gave me to diſtinguiſh me from the other officers, to each of whom they gave ſuch denominations, relative to the good or bad qualities they obſerved in them.

of brutes, and that this vice is corrected with difficulty even amongſt the French. The Indians imitate them eaſily in it, and ſay the white people have taught them to drink the *fiery water* *.

One day my Indian found the door of the King's magazine open; he ſneaked in like a ſerpent, got to a barrel of brandy, and ſhed half of it, by endeavouring to fill a bottle with it. This accident obliged me to diſmiſs him; however, as he was a good hunter, and had only one fault, his wife begged me to give him phyſic, to prevent his drinking: I willingly undertook the cure, with the aſſiſtance of his wife and relations. Once this hunter was drunk, but deſired ſtill more brandy; I got the people to tell him I had ſome, but that I was very tenacious of it. He came immediately, and aſked me for ſome: I ſaid, I had brandy, but I would not give it for nothing. He ſaid he was poor; however, if I would take his wife, he would hire her to me for a month. I anſwered, that the chiefs of the white warriors did not come to the red men to enjoy their wives; that if he would ſell me his ſon, I would willingly take him as a ſlave, and

* Thus they call *brandy*.

and give him in return a barrel of brandy; we made the bargain in preſence of ſeveral witneſſes, and he delivered his ſon to me.

I was ready to laugh at this farce, from the very beginning of it. I made him drink upon the bargain ſome brandy, into which I had put long pepper. When he had drunk it, he was bound, and brought to ſleep. When he was recovered of his drunkenneſs, the Cacique of the village and his relations, who were in the ſecret, came to him into his hut, where he lay upon a mat; they diſplayed to him all the horror of the unnatural action he had committed by ſelling his own offspring. The poor Indian came crying to me, and ſaid, *Indagé wai panis*, *i. e.* I am unworthy of living; I do no longer deſerve to bear the tender name of father. He was very angry at the brandy I had given him to drink, and which had fired all his ſtomach; he called it *urine of the chief of hell*, that is, of the evil ſpirit that cauſed it.

His wife, who is naturally humorous, and who was diverting herſelf at his expence, aſked him very coolly where his ſon was? He ſtill excuſed himſelf, ſaying, that, knowing me to be very kind, he expected I would return him his ſon;

ſon; that he knew the grand chief of the French *, and the father of the red men, had no ſlaves in his empire. I told him he was in the right, but that I had adopted his ſon, and would take him in that quality with me to France, in order to make him a Chriſtian, and that all the furs of his nation would not be ſufficient to redeem him.

As the relations ſeemed to be grieved, they adviſed the drunkard Indian to go to the *chief of the prayer*, or the man that ſpeaks with the great Spirit; for thus they call the prieſts: I told him, that if the chief of the prayer † required it, I ſhould not be contrary to him; I would return him his ſon, on condition that he ſhould be baptiſed, and that I ſhould be his godfather; that as to himſelf, I required from him an abjuration of drunkenneſs, which had proved ſo fatal to him. He ſaid my words were ſtrong, and he ſhould remember them while he lived; he begged I would adopt him as a brother, and ſaid he was going to ſtrike at the poſt ‡.

Since

* The French King.

† The Abbé *Gagnon*, of the order of St. Sulpitius, and chaplain of Fort *Chartres*.

‡ The Indian method of taking an oath. See Letter V.

Since that time he has never drank wine, or any ſpirituous liquors; I have ſent people to offer them to him, but he always refuſed them, ſaying, that he had ſtruck at the poſt, and that the Lord of life would be angry with him; that I had told him that this Spirit could not be deceived: he rocollected that once I had named the number of glaſſes of brandy which he had drunk, without my having ſeen him; to which he had anſwered, that it was very true, and that he believed that the great Spirit that ſees every thing muſt have told me of it. I took the following method when I wanted to know how many drams my Indian had taken. I left a clean glaſs near a barrel of brandy; the Indian, being alone, was tempted to drink a glaſs; after which I ordered the glaſs to be waſhed in hot water, and put in its place again; and every time he drank, my people always did the ſame thing. Accordingly it was very eaſy for me to tell him, thou haſt taken ſo many drams; he was always amazed at it, and thought I was a ſorcerer.

I have often remarked, that the Indians are highly pleaſed when the French careſs their little children; likewiſe, in order to make myſelf beloved and feared by them at the ſame time, when-

whenever I had reaſon to be diſpleaſed with their behaviour, I made uſe of this method: the more I ſeemed vexed and angry at the fathers, the more I affected friendſhip for their children; I careſſed them, and gave them European toys. The Indians readily gueſſed, that as I had no reaſon to complain of their wives and children, I did not love them leſs than before, and was only vexed at thoſe who had offended me, without extending my anger upon their families. This moved their heart, and conſequently they went out, killed ſome wild fowls, brought them to me, and, throwing them on the floor, ſaid, "This is to appeaſe thee, be no longer angry "with us." I immediately anſwered, I willingly forget the paſt, when I ſee you come back with your wits, meaning when you do not come empty handed. A father's heart is the ſame all over the world; every father is pleaſed with the friendſhip which is ſhewn to his children, who make returns by their careſſes.

You can well conceive, that a mere trifle can gain me the friendſhip of theſe people; and that it depends only upon the method of acting with them, to attach them to one's ſelf at all events. But let this ſuffice for this time; I think I muſt recall to your mind the plan I purpo-

ſed

ſed to follow; I only examine the ſituation of the places where I ſtop, and, during my ſtay, I ſhall apply particularly to know the genius of the people with whom I am to live for a time; and I think this ſtudy not beneath a traveller. You are a ſoldier and a philoſopher; I am perſuaded, that what I ſhall give you an account of will pleaſe you; for I flatter myſelf, that you depend upon the fidelity of your hiſtorian: indeed, I mean to aſſert nothing but what I am an eye-witneſs of; for I can neither invent nor exaggerate. I am, SIR, *&c.*

At Fort Chartres, among the Illinois,
the 28th of March 1752.

LET-

LETTER VII.

To the ſame.

Deſcription of the War of the Nations of Foxes againſt the Illinois, of which the Author has been an Eye-witneſs. Account how the French ſettled among theſe People.

SIR,

I HAVE enquired after the manner in which the French ſettlement has been made here. The country of the *Illinois* was diſcovered by our Canadian hunters; they found its climate very good, being in forty degrees north latitude, ſettled on it, and made an alliance with the natives. Many people among them married Indian girls, of which the greateſt part became Chriſtians: and after the diſcovery of *Louiſiana*, the India Company ſent many families

lies over hither, who lived and multiplied here. There are now five great villages of French inhabitants in theſe parts *. The moſt conſiderable place is called *Kaſkakias*, a name of the tribe of an *Illinois* ſettlement, which is about half a league from it. The Sieur *Sauſſier*, an engineer, has made a plan for conſtructing a new fort here, according to the intention of the court. It ſhall bear the ſame name with the old one, which is called Fort *de Chartres*.

The *Illinois* country is one of the fineſt in the world; it ſupplies all the lower parts of *Louiſiana* with flower. Its commerce conſiſts in furs, lead and ſalt. There are many ſalt ſprings †, that attract the wild oxen, and the roe-bucks, which like the paſtures around them very much. Their fleſh and tongues are ſalted, and furniſh another branch of commerce to *New Orleans*; and they cure hams, which equal thoſe of *Bayonne*. The fruits are as fine as in *France*.

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* The India Company were poſſeſſed of Louiſiana; but they gave it back to the King in 1731. The five villages of the French are that of the *Kaſkakias*, the Fort *Chartres*, St. *Philip*, the *Kaokias*, and the *Prairie du Rocher* (meadow on the rock); there is now a ſixth, called St. *Genevieve*.

† Called *Salt-licks*, by the Engliſh Planters. F.

The

The *Illinois* have very near the ſame manners and cuſtoms as the Nations I have already ſpoken of; they only differ in their language. They marry, and often, when they return from hunting, leave each other again, each party going a different way.

The marriage of the Indians is quite in the ſtate of nature, and has no other form than the mutual conſent of the parties. As they are not tied by any civil contract, whenever they are diſſatisfied with each other, they ſeparate, without ceremony, ſaying that marriage is a tie of the heart, and that they only marry in order to love each other, and help each other mutually in their wants. I have ſeen very happy marriages among theſe people; divorces and polygamy are uncommon amongſt them, though the latter is allowed by the laws. An Indian may have two wives if he hunts well; ſometimes one Indian marries two ſiſters, giving it as a reaſon that they will agree better among themſelves, than two that are ſtrangers to each other. The Indian women in general are very laborious; they are commonly told, when they are young, that if they be idle or heavy, they will get a wretched huſband. Here avarice, ambition, and many other paſſions, ſo common among the

Europeans,

Europeans, never ſtifle the feelings of nature, in a father's breaſt, or incline him to force his children, and much leſs to controul them in their inclinations. By an admirable ſympathy, deſerving of admiration, thoſe only are married, who love each other.

The *Illinois* Indians were formerly the moſt formidable in *Louſiana*, but the continual wars, which they have been engaged in, againſt the northren nations, have reduced them to a very ſmall number. The hatred of the *Canada Indians* againſt them, ariſes from the incurſions which the *Illinois* were uſed to make into their country, and becauſe they took and killed in theſe inroads, both the male and female beavers, which among theſe nations is reckoned a crime and cowardice, becauſe they make a great commerce with the ſkins of theſe *amphibia* *, which they exchange for European goods.

In 1752, the Indians of the tribe of *Koakias* met ſix Indians of the nation of *Foxes*, hunting †;

* Beavers are quadrupeds and probably called, by our author, *amphibia* for no other reaſon, but becauſe they may be eaten as fiſh on the *jours maigres* F.

† Their true name is *Outagamis*; they inhabit the country to the weſt of the Lake *Michigan*.

they took them priſoners, though they were not at war, and reſolved to burn them, that they might not give any account of them. One of the *Foxes*, or *Outagamis* was happy enough to eſcape from the ſtake he was faſtened to, and being purſued by his tormentors, he leaped into a lake, and eluded their reſearches, by ſwimming under water. He remained hidden in the ruſhes, only putting out his head from time to time to take breath. He had the firmneſs to remain in that poſture while his comrades were broiling. In the night time he eſcaped the watchfulneſs of the *Illinois*, who thought he was either drowned or eaten by the *armed fiſh* *. As he was naked and without arms, he was obliged, in order to ſubſiſt upon the road, to eat graſs like a beaſt. Being returned to his nation, he told them what had happened to him with the *Illinois*, and the unhappy fate which they had made his fellow-travellers undergo. Their relations immediately began to grieve for them after their manner. The chief of the nation called an aſſembly together, for they undertake nothing without a council; the reſult

* The armed fiſh in *Louiſiana* is exceedingly voracious. His teeth cut the iron of the fiſh hooks in pieces.

result was to send bundles of rods * to the chiefs of the tribes, who were their allies, among whom were the *Sioux*, the *Sakis* and the *Kikapous* who marched as auxiliary troops under the standard of the *Foxes*. The army consisted of a thousand warriors; every thing being in readiness, the general of the *Foxes* marched towards the *Illinois*, and chiefly towards the *Mitchigamias* who had given shelter to the *Koakias*.

The warriors being come together to the number of one thousand, they embarked in one hundred and eighty canoes made of birch tree bark, on the river *Ouisconsing* which falls into the *Mississippi*. By the current of the river, and the help of their oars, they were soon brought to their enemies, the *Illinois*.

They passed in good order by the fort of *Koakias* where the Chevalier *de Volsei*, an officer of my detachment, commanded. The van of this fleet of the *Foxes*, consisted of the best runners, who were to go on shore to reconnoitre. They

* As the Indians have not got the art of writing, the rods mark the number of warriors, and the day of assembling for the departure of the army.

landed about a quarter of a league from the *Mitchigamias* village, which was ſurrounded within a muſket ſhot by a wood; their enemies being far from expecting ſuch a viſit.

The *Foxes* had fixed upon *Corpus Chriſti* day for fighting the *Illinois*. They knew that the latter would come to Fort *Chartres* to ſee the ceremony which is performed by the French on that ſolemn day; the fort was only a league from the Indian village.

Every thing being in readineſs for the attack, the general of the *Foxes* ordered ten or twelve of the beſt runnners to throw away their bodies †. Theſe young men immediately fell upon the enemy's village and killed all they met as they came in, crying the cry of death, and having diſcharged their arms, they fled with as much quickneſs as they came.

The *Illinois* took up their arms and purſued them; but the army of the *Foxes*, lying on the ground,

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* This is a great holiday with the French.

† To *throw away* their bodies, is among the Indians to *expoſe* their bodies *to danger*, as thoſe do that are obliged to mount firſt of all the breach to ſtorm a place.

ground, in the high graſs, diſcharged all their arms and killed twenty-eight *Illinois*: at the ſame time they fell upon the village, and killed men, women and children; ſet fire to the village, and bound and led away the reſt as captives.

The *Foxes* loſt but four men in this glorious expedition, one of them being a chief with a medal *, of the nation of *Sioux*, who went with them as an ally.

I was a ſpectator of this ſlaughter, which happened on the ſixth of June 1752. I was at that time on a hill which overlooks the plain and the village of the *Mitchigamias*. I had the opportunity of ſaving the life of a girl of fifteen years of age, who came to bring me ſome ſtraw-berberries. At the time of the attack, ſhe ran away, and as the enemies purſued her, ſhe ran into my arms, where the barbarians did not venture to ſhoot at her, for fear of hitting me.

* This diſtinction, of which I have already ſpoken, is granted by order of the King, through his general, to the moſt valiant Indians, and who are moſt attached to the French nation.

This account will inform you, that nothing can be more dangerous, than being taken unawares by theſe nations. None but thoſe, who were gone out of curioſity to ſee the proceſſion at the French fort of *Chartres*, eſcaped the revenge of the *Foxes*, who contented with their victory, re-embarked in their boats, and put the priſoners well bound in the van; and paſſing by the French fort of *Koakias*, they gave a general ſalute with their guns.

The chief, or admiral of the *Foxes*, had hoiſted the French colours on his canoe, and was as proud of his victory, as if he had ſubdued a great empire.

M. *de Macarty*, our governor, has written to thoſe in the poſts of Canada, to treat with the *Foxes* concerning the ranſom of the *Illinois*, whom they have taken priſoners.

Theſe cunning Indians had conducted their undertaking ſo well, that we knew nothing of it till it was executed; they hid the knowledge of it from us, juſtly fearing that we ſhould interpoſe our mediation between them and the *Illinois*, as being the friends and allies of both; but the offended

offended nation was desirous of vengeance only.

The village of the *Mitchigamias* has lost about eighty persons, both killed and prisoners, in this fatal affair.

On the sixteenth of *June*, I was ordered by the commandant of Fort *Chartres*, to assemble the remains of the conquered tribes of *Koakias* and *Mitchigamias*, and I held this short speech to them, by means of the King's interpreter.

I speak to you, my children *, on the part of your father, M. *de Macarty*, who takes a great share in your misfortune, at the same time he exhorts you to take care in sowing your maize, that you may escape the want in which you are at present. Here is some maize, which he gives you, because his heart suffers to see you weakened by hunger. He has likewise told me to give this little quantity of powder, shot and flints; we cannot do better at present, because we have our enemies as well as you, and we do not know when the boats will come from the great village (i. e. *New Orleans*) Your father

* The Indians are used to call every officer, *my father*.

recommends it to you to go a hunting, and to take your families with you, that they may have ſomewhat to live upon, leaving only a certain number of men, to take care of the fields, and to prevent the wild beaſts from ruining them; you muſt likewiſe take care to ſend one of your people from time to time, to inquire how matters ſtand here.

The Anſwer of the Chiefs of the Tribes.

"It is very well, my Father, that the great chief* "pities us. It was a very brave action to be ſur- "prized in the manner we have been; thou haſt been "an eye-witneſs of it, for thou haſt ſaved the life "of one of our girls; our tribe have been killed "by the *Foxes*, who have burnt our huts with our "victuals, and taken our booty, during our re- "treat at the *Kaſkakias*. Thou muſt think, that "we cannot leave any here, or they muſt ſtarve, "and would ever lament the death of our rela- "tions, who periſhed in this ſad action. But to "convince our father of our fidelity, tell him, "by means of the ſpeaking ſubſtance (paper), "that from time to time we ſhall ſend ſome one "of

* Thus theſe nations call the ſuperior officers of a province or diſtrict.

"of our people to him with game to know what "happens here.

"We hope the grand chief of the French "will protect and help us to ſhelter ourſelves a-"gainſt the enemy. We beg thee likewiſe to make "intereſt with him that he may be ſo good as to "ſend word to ſeveral families of our people, "who ſtayed among the *Kaſkakias*, to join us, "in order to aſſiſt us in the common defence of "the intended fort, of which we have drawn "the plan on the ſhore of the *Miſſiſippi*."

Speech of Chikagou, a Chief with a Medal.

"I beg, my father, that thou wouldſt get our "arms mended, and we ſhall decamp after that "immediately: and that thou wilt tell the grand "chief not to hear the bad words, which our "enemies will not fail to throw out againſt our "nation, let him remember the promiſe I made "him, it ſhall be a true one; and I preſerve his "words in my heart."

Anſwer.

If what thou ſayeſt be true, thy father will receive thee well, and all the other chiefs will endeavour

endeavour to pleaſe thee, if thy heart agree with thy tongue. It is neceſſary thou ſhouldſt ſet out ſoon: conſider the damage which the dogs of thy village have done among the cattle belonging to the French inhabitants *, and with what tranquility they ſuffer it; that they have hitherto ſaid nothing about it, is in conſideration of your misfortunes, which grieve them, and they cannot ſee you reduced to this ſad condition without being moved at it: but they begin to be tired, therefore you muſt remedy it. Your father will be ſatisfied when he knows that you are gone to the hunting country, becauſe his heart is afflicted to ſee you ſuffer hunger, and he pities his children.

As to myſelf, I heartily wiſh you good ſucceſs in hunting, and a plentiful crop at your return. I hope the *Great Spirit* will have pity upon you; do not ſlight him: recommend it to your young people not to play the fool, that is, not to deſtroy the female beavers in the lakes and

* The Indians have many dogs for hunting; and they themſelves having loſt their proviſions, their dogs were hungry, and devoured the cattle of the French. The Indian dogs are of a breed which partakes of the wolf and the dog.

and hunting places of your enemies, who will not fail to be revenged for it, as you have unhappily experienced.

Your father has written to Mr. *Adamville*. who commands at the *Peorias*, to make your peace with the *Foxes*, and to treat with them about the ranſom of your wives and children, whom they have taken priſoners; the merchandizes ſhall be furniſhed for that purpoſe for the account of the king, your father, grand chief of the white men and of the red men.

Among the Indians, thoſe who run away or deſert in an action, where their honour, and the defence of their country is at ſtake, are not puniſhed; but they are conſidered as the diſgrace of human nature. The others are continually reproaching them, that they are not men, but old women; they are deſpiſed by the very women, and the uglieſt girls will not accept of them for huſbands, and if ever it happened that a girl ſhould be willing to marry a coward, her relations would not allow of it, for fear of having men without courage, and uſeleſs to their country in their family. Theſe men are obliged to let their hair grow, and to wear an *alkonan*, like

like the women *. I saw one of them, who being ashamed of his figure, went by himself to fight the *Tchikachas*, who are our enemies and theirs. He came near them, creeping like a snake, and hiding himself in the great grass during three or four days, without eating or drinking. As the English bring goods to the *Tchikachas* (Chicksaws) in caravans, our *Illinois* killed one of them who had strayed from the caravan, cut off his head, mounted his horse, and got off. He was out three months upon this fine expedition. On his return the nation received him with due honour, and gave him a wife, that he might beget warriors. Before his departure he eat of dog's flesh, conformably to the opinion current among his people, and of which I have already had the honour of speaking to you.

The grand chief of the *Illinois* is descended from the family of the *Tamaroas*, who were formerly sovereigns of this country. This Cacique or Indian king, is the son of him that went to France with his attendants in 1720. He was presented to the King, who gave him a medal with his portrait, which the son now wears on his

* A short petticoat, which the Indian women make use of, to cover their nakedness.

his breaſt. There was likewiſe a woman of the nation of the *Miſſouris*, who was called the princeſs of the *Miſſouris* *. The Sieur *Dubois*, a ſerjeant, and interpreter of thoſe American ambaſſadors, having been created an officer by the King, married this *Miſſourian* lady at his return. She became a widow; and afterwards married the Sieur *Marin*, a captain of the militia, by whom ſhe had a daughter, who is ſtill alive.

The Indian princeſs deſcribed to her countrymen the magnificence ſhe had ſeen at the court of France, where ſhe had been well received, and loaded with preſents; ſhe had, amongſt other things, got a fine repeating watch ſet with diamonds, which the ſavages called a ſpirit, on account of its motion, which ſeemed ſupernatural to them.

I have here ſpoken with an old Indian, who was in the retinue of the Prince *Tamaroas*; I aſked him ſeveral queſtions concerning France, and

* She was the daughter of the grand chief of this nation. It is ſaid ſhe was M. *de Bourmont*'s miſtreſs, who, during his command among the *Miſſouris*, never ceaſed to praiſe and extol the wonders of France, and by that means engaged ſeveral to follow him: this girl went over to the Chriſtian religion, and was baptiſed at the church of *Notre Dame*.

and especially what fine sights he had seen at *Paris:* he answered, that it was the *Rue de Boucheries*, (the shambles) because there was a great abundance of flesh; and after that the *Rue St. Honoré*. When he told his countrymen that he had seen the opera, and that all the people there are jugglers or sorcerers; and that he likewise saw, upon the *Pont-Neuf*, some little men who danced and sung *, they would not believe him. When he said, that, in the great village of the French *(Paris)*, he had seen as many people as there are leaves on the trees in their forests, (an hyperbole which the Indians make use of to express a great number, having no words to express a number above a hundred), they answered, that the Europeans probably had fascinated his eyes, that it was impossible, and that they had always offered the same objects to his eyes. He said that he had seen the huts of the grand chief of the French, *i. e. Versailles* and *Louvre*, and that they contained more people than there are in their country: he likewise added, that he had seen the hut of the old warriors, (the royal hospital of invalids). As this old Indian began already to doat, he agreed with the other Indians, that the French had bewitched him. Another

Illinois,

* A puppet-show.

Illinois, who had made the ſame voyage, told his countrymen, that, in the *Thuilleries*, and other public walks, he had ſeen men who were half women, having their hair dreſſed like women, wearing the ſame ear-rings, and great noſe-gays on their breaſt; that he ſuſpected they put *rouge* on their faces, and that he found they ſmelled like crocodiles *.

This Indian ſpoke with the greateſt contempt of that race of mortals, whom we know under the name of *petits-maitres*, or beaus, who are born with the weakneſs and the delicacy peculiar to women; nature ſeeming to have begun making them ſuch, and afterwards to make a miſtake in the formation of their ſex.

The Indian had likewiſe remarked the enormous height of the head-dreſſes of our women in that time †, and of the heels of their ſhoes. But what would he have ſaid, if he had ſeen the extravagant width of their hoops, and their fine ſhape

* The crocodile in the *Miſſiſippi* has follicles with muſk, which ſmells ſtronger than the Eaſt Indian muſk; its effluvia are ſo ſtrong, that you can often ſmell the animal before you ſee it.

† During the regency.

ſhape forced, from their infancy, into that elegant cuiraſs called ſtays. Theſe coquets are not leſs ridiculous by their artifices, than their ſilly adorers. You have made the obſervation, as I have done, in the courſe of your travels through Europe, that the foreigners and country gentlemen, who come to *Paris* to copy our beaus and our belles, have rendered themſelves inſupportable to their countrymen by this unnatural method of acting: indeed, ſaid our American, ſuch effeminate manners diſhonour a reſpectable nation.

I have received a letter from the Marquis *de Vaudreuil*, in which he expreſſes great concern for the unhappy accident which has befallen me, by the wreck of my boat. This governor, from a pure effect of his generoſity, which is natural to him, has been willing to alleviate, as much as is in his power, the fate of an unhappy officer, who loſt all he had in the King's ſervice.

He has given me leave to come to *New Orleans*, and offered me his purſe and his table; I am afraid he will be gone for France by the time I arrive at *New Orleans*. It may be ſaid with truth, that he has deſerved the eſteem and friendſhip of every body. The Indians inceſſantly com-

compare him now to M. *de Bienville*, his predeceſſor. When theſe people do not ſpeak in praiſe of a governor, but, on the contrary, agree with all the inhabitants in deteſting him, it is the ſtrongeſt accuſation againſt him.

Before I conclude, I ſhall add a word about the *Miſſouris*. Baron *Porneuf*, who has been governor of Fort *Orleans* eſtabliſhed in that nation, and who knows their genius perfectly well, has informed me, that they were formerly very warlike and good, but that the French hunters had corrupted them, by their bad conduct, and by ſome diſunions among them; they had made themſelves contemptible by frauds in trade; they ſeduced and carried off the Indian women, which, among theſe people, is a very great crime; for they never pardon ſuch ſorts of robberies. All the irregularities of theſe bad Frenchmen irritated the *Miſſouris* againſt them; and therefore, during M. *de Bienville*'s government, they maſſacred the Sieur *Dubois*, and the little garriſon under his command; and as no ſoldier eſcaped, we have never been able to know who was right and who was wrong.

The ſtory I ſhall tell you will convince you, that theſe people are only nominally ſavages, and

that the French, who endeavoured to impoſe upon them, have deceived themſelves. About forty years ago, when theſe Americans did not yet know the Europeans, a traveller or hunter penetrated into their country, made them acquainted with fire-arms, and ſold them muſkets and gunpowder: they went out a-hunting, and got great plenty of game, and of courſe many furs. Another traveller went thither ſome time after, with ammunitions; but the Indians being ſtill provided, they did not care to barter with the Frenchman, who invented a very odd trick, in order to ſell his powder, without much troubling his head with the conſequences that might reſult from his impoſture to his countrymen. He thought he had done a great action in deceiving theſe poor people.

As the Indians are naturally curious, they were deſirous of knowing how powder, which they called *grain*, was made in France. The traveller made them believe, that it was ſown in *ſavannahs*, and that they had crops of it as of indigo or millet in *America*.

The *Miſſouris* were pleaſed with this diſcovery, and ſowed all the gun-powder they had left, which obliged them to buy that of the Frenchman,

man, who got a conſiderable quantity of beaver-ſkins, otter-ſkins, &c. for it, and afterwards went down the river to the *Illinois*, where M. *de Tonti* commanded.

The *Miſſouris* went from time to time to the *ſavannah*, to ſee if the powder was growing: they had placed a guard there, to hinder the wild beaſts from ſpoiling the field; but they ſoon found out the Frenchman's trick: It muſt be obſerved, that the Indians can be deceived but once, and that they always remember it; accordingly theſe were reſolved to be revenged upon the firſt Frenchman that ſhould come to them. Soon after, the hopes of profit excited the traveller to ſend his partner to the *Miſſouris*, with goods proper for their commerce; they ſoon found out, that this Frenchman was aſſociated with the man who had impoſed upon them; however, they diſſembled the trick which his predeceſſor had played. They gave him the public hut, which was in the middle of the village, to depoſit his bales in; and when they were all laid out to view, the *Miſſouris* came in confuſedly, and all thoſe who had been fooliſh enough to ſow gun-powder, took away ſome goods; ſo the poor Frenchman was rid of all his bales at once, but without any equivalent

from the Indians. He complained much of theſe proceedings, and laid his grievances before the great chief, who anſwered him very gravely: That he ſhould have juſtice done him, but that for that purpoſe he muſt wait for the gun-powder harveſt, his ſubjects having ſown that commodity by the advice of his countryman; that he might believe upon the word of a ſovereign, that, after that harveſt was over, he would order a general hunt, and that all the ſkins of the wild beaſts which ſhould be taken, ſhould be given in return for the important ſecret, which the other Frenchman had taught them.

Our traveller alledged, that the ground of the *Miſſouris* was not fit for producing gun-powder, and that his ſubjects had not taken notice, that France was the only country where it ſucceeded in. All his reaſoning was uſeleſs; he returned much lighter than he came, and aſhamed of having been corrected by ſavage men.

This leſſon did not prevent others from going to the *Miſſouris*; one of them intended to play a good trick there; he got ready a piragua, which he loaded with trifles; and, being informed of the preceding adventure, he filled a little caſk with

with aſhes and pounded charcoal, at the top of which he put ſome gun-powder. When he arrived, he put all his goods in the great hut, in order to tempt the *Miſſouris* to rob him; it happened as he expected. The Frenchman made a great noiſe, gave the Indians abuſive language, and, running to the caſk of gun-powder, he opened it, took a burning match, and cried out, I have loſt my wits, I will blow up the hut, and you ſhall come with me to the country of the ſpirits. The Indians were frightened, and knew not what to do; the other Frenchmen who came with him were out of doors, and cried out, our brother has loſt his ſenſes, and he *will* not recover them again, till he gets his goods back, or till he gets paid for for them. The chiefs went through the village, to exhort the people to pay; thoſe who had any relations in the hut joined them; the people were moved, and every one brought all the furs he had into the hut; the Frenchman then ſaid he had found his ſenſes again. The chief preſented him with the calumet, he ſmoked, and poured water upon the gun-powder to make it uſeleſs, or rather to hide his fraud from the Indians. He brought home fine furs to the value of a thouſand crowns. The Indians have ever

ſince held him in great eſteem, giving him the name of a *true man*, or *man of courage*.

I ſhall finiſh my letter with the deſcription of a very odd and extraordinary ceremony, performed by the *Miſſouris*, who came hither as ambaſſadors, at the time when the Chevalier *de Boiſbriant* commanded here. This tragic ſtory will at the ſame time ſerve to teach officers, who, through a noble ambition, aſpire to military commands, that both the theoretical and the practical part of geography ought abſolutely to be underſtood by them; and that it is neceſſary they ſhould carefully ſtudy the interior ſituation of a country where they are at war, in order to avoid all ſurpriſes of the enemy, and to preſerve the lives of the men who are under their care. What I ſhall now tell, will ſufficiently convince them of this neceſſity.

Spain ſaw, with great diſpleaſure, during the regency, our ſettlements on the *Miſſiſippi*: The Engliſh too, on their ſide, ſpared no intrigues to ruin this growing colony, as they do ſtill in regard to thoſe upon the banks of the river *Ohio*, which they ſay belongs to them; and they have likewiſe laid claim to the *Miſſiſippi*.

In

In 1720, the Spaniards formed the deſign of ſettling at the *Miſſouris*, who are near the *Illinois*, in order to confine us more to the weſtward; the *Miſſouris* are far diſtant from *New Mexico*, which is the moſt northerly province the Spaniards have.

They believed, that in order to put their colony in ſafety, it was neceſſary they ſhould entirely deſtroy the *Miſſouris*; but concluding that it would be impoſſible to ſubdue them with their own forces alone, they reſolved to make an alliance with the *Oſages*, a people who were the neighbours of the *Miſſouris*, and at the ſame time their mortal enemies, hoping, with their aſſiſtance, to ſurpriſe and deſtroy their enemies. With that view they formed a caravan at *Santa-Fé*, conſiſting of men, women, and ſoldiers, having a *Jacobine* prieſt for their chaplain, and an engineer-captain for their chief and conductor, with the horſes and cattle neceſſary for a permanent ſettlement.

The caravan being ſet out, miſtook its road, and arrived at the *Miſſouris*, taking them to be the *Oſages*. Immediately the conductor of the caravan orders his interpreter to ſpeak to the chief of the *Miſſouris*, as if he had been that of

the *Oſages*, and tell him that they were come to make an alliance with him, in order to deſtroy together the *Miſſouris* their enemies.

The great chief of the *Miſſouris* concealed his thoughts upon this expedition, ſhewed the Spaniards ſigns of great joy, and promiſed to execute a deſign with them which gave him much pleaſure. To that purpoſe he invited them to reſt for a few days after their tireſome journey, till he had aſſembled his warriors, and held council with the old men: but the reſult of this council of war was, that they ſhould entertain their gueſts very well, and affect the ſincereſt friendſhip for them.

They agreed together to ſet out in three days. The Spaniſh captain immediately diſtributed fifteen hundred muſkets amongſt them, with an equal number of piſtols, ſabres, and hatchets; but the very morning after this agreement, the *Miſſouris* came, by break of day, into the Spaniſh camp, and killed them all except the *Jacobine* prieſt, whoſe ſingular dreſs did not ſeem to belong to a warrior: they called him a *mag-pie*, and diverted themſelves with making him ride on one of the Spaniſh horſes, on their days of aſſembly.

The

The prieſt, though he was careſſed and well fed, was not without uneaſineſs, fearing that theſe jokes would end in ſacrificing him to the *Manitou*, or deity of the Indians; therefore, one day, taking advantage of their confidence in him, he took his meaſures to get away before their faces. All thoſe tranſactions the *Miſſouris* themſelves have related, when they brought the ornaments of the chapel hither. They were dreſſed out in theſe ornaments: the chief had on the naked ſkin the chaſuble, with the paten ſuſpended from his neck, having driven a nail through it, and making uſe of it as a breaſt-plate; he marched gravely at the head of all the others, being crowned with feathers and a pair of horns. Thoſe that followed him had more chaſubles on; after them came thoſe who carried the ſtole, followed by thoſe who had the ſcarfs about their necks; after them came three or four young Indians, ſome with albs, and others with ſurplices on. The Acolothiſts, contrary to order, were at the end of this proceſſion, not being adorned enough, and held in their hands a croſs or chandelier, whilſt they danced in cadence. Theſe people, not knowing the reſpect due to the ſacred utenſils, hung the chalice to a horſe's neck, as if it had been a bell.

Repreſent

Repreſent to yourſelf the ridiculous ſight which the ſingular order of this proceſſion muſt offer to the eye, as they arrived before the houſe of M. *de Boiſbriant* the King's lieutenant, marching in cadence, and with the great calumet of peace diſplayed according to cuſtom.

The firſt Frenchman who ſaw this maſquerade arrive, ran laughing to give M. *de Boiſbriant* intelligence of it; this officer, who is as pious as he is brave, was overcome with grief at the ſight of the Indians, and knew not what to think of the event; he feared they had deſtroyed ſome French ſettlement; but when he ſaw them near by, his ſadneſs vaniſhed, and he had much to do to keep himſelf from laughing with the reſt.

The *Miſſouris* told him, that the Spaniards intended to have deſtroyed them; that they brought him all theſe things, as being of no uſe to them, and that, if he would, he might give them ſuch goods in return as were more to their liking. Accordingly he gave them ſome goods, and ſent the ornaments to M. *de Bienville*, who was then governor-general of the province of *Louiſiana*.

As

As the Indians had got a great number of Spaniſh horſes from this caravan, the chief of the *Miſſouris* gave the fineſt to M. *de Boiſbriant*.

They had likewiſe brought with them the map which had conducted the Spaniards ſo ill, who came to ſurrender themſelves, by confeſſing their intention to their enemies.

I ſhall profit of the permiſſion which I have obtained to go down to *New Orleans*. If I find our general, and a letter from you there, it will be a double pleaſure to me.

I am, SIR, &c.

At the Illinois, the 15th of May 1753.

LET-

LETTER VIII.

To the same.

The Author leaves the Country of the Illinois, and goes to New Orleans. Arrival of Monsieur de Kerlerec. Departure of the Marquis de Vaudreuil. The Author's second Voyage to the Illinois. Heroic Action of a Father, who sacrificed himself for his Son.

SIR,

IN June I arrived at the Capital of *Louisiana*, where I found a letter from you, which gave me real pleasure, by informing me that you continue to enjoy your health, and it made up for the loss I had of our dear governor's presence; when I came hither I heard he was already gone to France; and to compleat my misfortunes, Mr. *Michel de la Ruevilliero* was dead of an apoplexy; he had wrote

wrote to me that he had with ſorrow heard of the loſs of my boat, and that notwithſtanding it was not the king's cuſtom to re-imburſe ſuch expences, yet he would repair this loſs with pleaſure for my relief: that I ſhould make an exact account of all I had loſt, and join to it a certificate from M. *de Macarty*, the commander of the convoy: this was, he ſaid, an indiſpenſable neceſſity, that this article may at leaſt have ſome appearance, and thus be entered in the accounts; he promiſed that as ſoon as he ſhould have this paper, he would ſettle what I was to receive. The Marquis de *Vaudreuil* had recommended me at his departure to his ſucceſſor M. *de Kerlerec*, who has not paid any attention to his recommendation; his qualities are quite the reverſe of thoſe of his predeceſſor; but this new governor alledges, that he is not come ſo far, merely for the ſake of changing the air. He kept me at *New Orleans*, and only allowed me to rejoin my garriſon in 1754, with the convoy which M. de *Faverot* commanded. I could not find any room to embark my proviſions for the voyage, on account of the number of goods every one was allowed to take as a venture, and which filled the king's boats: I made my juſt repreſentations on this ſubject to M. *de Kerlerec*, who made me ſuffer all kinds of diſagreeable circumſtances

ſtances on this occaſion. After which, having aſked me what venture I took with me, I anſwered, that I underſtood nothing of commerce; that being a ſoldier, his majeſty had ſent me to *Louiſiana* to ſerve him, and that I placed all my glory in that ſervice, at laſt M. *de Kerlerec* gave me leave to join my garriſon.

I left *New Orleans* the ſeventeenth of Auguſt, but the boats, as I have already ſaid, were ſo much laden with ventures, that being overtaken by the froſt, we could not get to the *Illinois*, but were obliged to winter on the road; and the convoy only arrived in January, 1755, which occaſioned extortions and immenſe coſts for the king's account. The fatigue of ſo long a voyage ruined my health ſo much, that I was reduced to the utmoſt extremity. I was conducted on foot by Indians, and when I was tired, they carried me in a dreſſed ox hide, made in the form of a hamock, hung upon a great pole, as a litter. They changed ſucceſſively, and in this manner I came once more to the old fort *Chartres*, where I lay in a hut, till I could get a lodging in the new fort, which is almoſt finiſhed. It is built of free ſtone, flanked with four baſtions, and capable of containing a garriſon of three hundred men. I

aſked

aſked M. *de Macarty*'s leave to go to change the air at the *Kaokias*, who are a day's journey from Fort *Chartres*, and the road to it is either by water or by land. In this poſt there is a little fort on the left ſide of the *Miſſiſippi*, it is the great road of the *Illinois* to *Canada*, and the center of commerce of *New France*, or *Louiſiana*, which is conſiderable in furs.

The prieſts of the order of St. *Sulpicius*, to whom the iſle and town of *Montreal* belong, have eſtabliſhed a miſſion here under the name of the *Holy Family of Jeſus*. There are but three prieſts. I have been particularly acquainted with the Abbé *Mercier*, a Canadian by birth, and vicar of the whole country of *Illinois*. He was a man of probity, whoſe friendſhip could not fail of being of uſe to me, by the knowledge he had acquired of the manners of the Indians, who were edified by his virtue and diſintereſtedneſs. He ſpoke the language of the country, and on account of the fluency with which he expreſſed himſelf in it, he was highly eſteemed among the Indians, who conſult him in all matters. He has ſpent forty five years in cultivating the Lord's vineyard in theſe diſtant countries, and the Indian nations of theſe parts

have

have always reſpected him. A man of his character could never have lived long enough for the happineſs of theſe people. This worthy apoſtle of *Louiſiana*, fell into a conſumption in Lent, and he died of it one Friday at half an hour after eleven at night, expiring as a Chriſtian hero. He had an admirable preſence of mind, and I have regretted him very much. The French and the Indians were inconſolable; the latter ſent their deputies according to their cuſtom to lament him on his tomb. They came in ſwarms, and as ſoon as they arrived near the houſe of the late Abbé, they cried out aloud and made doleful lamentations. Theſe poor people were in a great conſternation, and grief was painted on their faces. Theſe people, whom we call ſavages, know the true virtue in man; this man had worked almoſt during his whole life for their welfare; they called him their father and the chief of the prayer.

What a difference is there between this miſſionary and another anterior to him, who falſely attributed to himſelf the diſcovery of *Louiſiana*; I mean the father *Hennepin*, a Recollet friar, of whom I ſhall ſpeak to you. In 1683, he publiſhed a relation, the title of which is not right: for

for the country which the Recollet, and the Sieur *Decan* diſcovered in going up the *Miſſiſippi* from the river of *Illinois* to the fall St. *Anthony*, does not belong to *Louiſiana*, but to *Canada*. The relation of a ſecond voyage of father *Hennepin*, in the *Recueil des Voyages du Nord*, bears a title which is equally falſe: voyage to a country greater than Europe, between the frozen ocean, and new *Mexico*; for though they have gone very far up the *Miſſiſippi*, they have ſtill been at a great diſtance from the frozen ocean. When the author publiſhed this ſecond relation he had quarrelled with M. *de la Salle*; it ſeems that he was actually forbid returning to *America*, and that the diſpleaſure this reſtriction gave him, prompted him to retire to Holland, where he publiſhed a third work, intitled a new deſcription of a very great country, ſituated in *America* between new *Mexico* and the frozen ocean, with reflections on M. *de la Salle*'s undertakings and other things concerning the deſcription and hiſtory of *North America*.

The author there not only vents all his ill-nature on M. *de la Salle*, but likewiſe throws it upon *France*, pretending to have been ill-treated by the nation. He means to ſave his honour by declaring that he was born a ſubject of the Ca-

tholic king *; but he ought to reflect that it was at the expence of France that he travelled in *America*, and that it was in the name of his moſt Chriſtian majeſty, that he and the Sieur *Decan* took poſſeſſion of the countries which they had diſcovered. He did not fear to advance, that it was with the conſent of his Catholic majeſty, his firſt ſovereign, that he dedicated his relation, to William the Third, king of Great Britain, in which he ſolicits that monarch to conquer theſe vaſt regions, and to ſend Miſſionaries thither, to teach the Indians the Chriſtian religion; a proceeding which excited the ridicule of the Catholics, and ſcandalized the Proteſtants, who were ſurprized to ſee a prieſt who called himſelf a miſſionary, exhort a Proteſtant ſovereign to found a Roman church in *America*. All his works are beſides written in a pompous ſtile, which ſhocks the reader, and offends him by the liberties which the author takes, and by his indecent invectives. Father *Hennepin* thought he might make uſe of the privilege of a traveller; but he has likewiſe been much cried down by his fellow-travellers, who have often declared, that he was very unfaithful

* Father Henneppin was a native of *Douay*.

faithful in all his accounts. It appears that there was more vanity in his undertaking, than true zeal in making proſelytes in *America*.

Whilſt I was at the *Koakias*, ſome Indians of the nation of *Oſages* arrived there; their *Manitou*, or falſe deity, was a dried ſerpent, of a monſtrous ſize. Theſe people ſaid that this prodigious animal had committed great devaſtations in their country; that it ſwallowed a tyger-cat all at once; that conſequently they had declared war againſt it, and were gone to attack it. They followed it by the track, but neither balls nor arrows could penetrate its body, which was covered with very hard ſcales, like thoſe of a crocodile. They ſucceeded at laſt in putting it to death by ſhooting balls and arrows at it, which blinded it. He that had killed it carried the mark or impreſſion of it on his body, in the ſame manner as the *Akanzas* imprinted the roe-buck on my thigh. They make this laſting mark in the following manner. They firſt draw with black, or with gun-powder the figure of the animal or object they mean to repreſent, on the fleſh; after which they ſting the ſkin in the out-line, with one or more needles to the blood; the figure is then ſlightly waſhed

over with a fine ſpunge dipt in a ſolution of rock ſalt, which mixes the blood with the black, contracting the ſkin which has been ſtung, and renders the figure indelible. This is not done without ſome pain; but as it is a kind of knighthood to which they are only intitled by great actions, they ſuffer with pleaſure, in order to paſs for men of courage. Theſe marks of diſtinction multiply in proportion to the fine actions they do in war.

If one of them ſhould get himſelf marked, without having previouſly diſtinguiſhed himſelf in battle, he would be degraded, and looked upon as a coward, unworthy of an honour, which only belongs to thoſe who generouſly expoſe their lives in defence of their country. The Indians only value the ſons of Caciques, in as much as they are brave and virtuous after the example of their fathers and anceſtors.

I ſaw an Indian, who, though he had never ſignalized himſelf in defence of the nation, however choſe to get a mark on his body, in order to deceive thoſe who only judged from appearances. He would paſs for a man of courage with a view to obtain one of the prettieſt girls of the nation in marriage, who, ſavage as ſhe was,

was

was however not without ambition. As he was on the point of concluding the match with her relations, the warriors, full of indignation on ſeeing a coward boaſt with a mark due only to military merit, held an aſſembly of chiefs of war, in order to puniſh ſuch audaciouſneſs. The council agreed, that, to obviate ſuch an abuſe, which would confound brave men with cowards, he who had wrongfully adorned himſelf with the figure of a club on his ſkin, without ever having ſtruck a blow at war, ſhould have the mark torn off, that is, the place ſhould be flayed, and that the ſame ſhould be done to all who would offend in the ſame caſe.

As there was no pardon to hope for, his condemnation being pronounced by an act of this Indian ſenate, who is jealous of maintaining the honour of the nation, I offered, in commiſeration of the poor wretch, to cure him in the French manner; I ſaid I would take off the ſkin and the mark without hurting him, and that my remedy would change the blood into water. The Indians, ignorant of my ſecret, believed I jeſted with them: therefore, counterfeiting their jugglers, I gave the pretended bravo a calabaſh full of ſyrup of the maple-tree, into which I had put a doſe of opium; and, whilſt he was aſleep,

I applied Spaniſh flies to the figure of the club which he bore on his breaſt, and over them ſome plantain leaves, which cauſed tumours; the ſkin and the mark went off, and a watery matter came out. This method of proceeding ſurpriſed the Indian jugglers, who were ignorant of the Spaniſh flies, or Cantharides, which are very common in *North America*. They give a light in night-time; and even the ſmalleſt types can be read, by holding the inſect near to the letters, and following the lines.

There is often a ſimilarity in the manners of the Indians and of the Europeans, though they may appear ever ſo different amongſt themſelves. The following example is a proof of it. An officer belonging to the regiment of the *Iſle de France*, having fallen in love with a young lady at *Paris* in 1749, the mother of the lady told him, that ſhe would willingly give him her daughter, provided he was adorned with the croſs of *St. Louis*. In order to accelerate his marriage, love inſpired him with the thought of taking that diſtinction from himſelf, which the King alone can give away. The lady already looked upon him as her ſon-in-law; but a few days after, the falſe chevalier is met by an officer of his regiment, who, being before him in the ſervice, is

ſurpriſed

ſurpriſed to ſee him obtain the croſs before himſelf. The new chevalier told him, that, with protections, one could get at every thing. The officer, who knew nothing of the other's views, goes immediately to M. *d'Argenſon*, and repreſents to him the injuſtice done to him, by giving the order of St. Louis to his junior officer. The miniſter denies it, and ſends for the liſt of promotions, in which the officer is not compriſed: accordingly he is taken up, and brought before the tribunal of the Marſhals of France. A court was held at the hoſpital of invalids, wherein Marſhal *Belle-iſle* preſided. The falſe chevalier was ſentenced to have the croſs taken from him, to be degraded, and to be confined in a fortreſs during twenty years.

The Indian women are allowed to make marks all over their body, without any bad conſequences; I have ſeen ſome of them who had marks even on their breaſts, though that part be extremely delicate; but they endure it firmly, like the men, in order to pleaſe them, and to appear handſomer to them.

To return to the *Manitou* of the *Oſages*, I wiſhed to have this pretended relic in my poſſeſſion, in order to adorn your collection of na-

tural curioſities with it; I was willing to treat about it with the Indian prieſt who ſerved it, offering him European goods in return, and repreſenting to him that the adoration of this animal was an abuſe; that he ought, as we do, to worſhip the *Great Spirit*, or *Author of Nature*; but this cunning prieſt of the devil, in owning that his ſuperſtitious countrymen adored every thing uncommon, told me, that he expected to make a great profit of his *Manitou*; that, being a phyſician, and a juggler beſides, he could eaſily make them believe that his deity eat with the evil ſpirit at night, and that they muſt bring him victuals into his hut, and fine furs to dreſs him out.

Thus this impoſtor, by his artful diſcourſes, gives weight to the errors and prejudices of theſe ignorant people. Theſe fellows make them believe, that they converſe with the devil at night, whom the Indians are much afraid of, becauſe he can only do harm; whereas they ſay the *Great Spirit*, being good, can do them no hurt.

I ſhall finiſh my letter by an account of the tragic death of an Indian of the nation of *Collapiſſas*, who ſacrificed himſelf for his ſon; I have admired

admired this heroic deed, which raiſes human generoſity to the higheſt pitch.

A *Chactaw*, ſpeaking very ill of the French, ſaid, that the *Collapiſſas* were their *dogs*, *i. e.* their ſlaves; one of theſe, vexed at ſuch abuſive language, killed the *Chactaw* with his gun. The nation of *Chactaws*, which is the greateſt and moſt numerous on this continent, armed immediately, and ſent deputies to *New Orleans* to aſk from the governor the head of the murderer, who had put himſelf under the protection of the French. They offered preſents to make up the quarrel, but the cruel nation of *Chactaws* would not accept any; they even threatened to deſtroy the village of *Collapiſſas*. To prevent the effuſion of blood, the poor unhappy Indian was delivered up to them. The Sieur *Ferrand*, commander of the German ſettlement on the right ſhore of the *Miſſiſippi*, was charged with this commiſſion. The rendez-vous for this purpoſe was given between the village *Collapiſſa* and the ſettlement of the Germans; and the ſacrifice was performed there as follows:

The Indian was called *Tichou Mingo*, i. e. Cacique's ſervant. He ſtood upright, and held a ſpeech, according to the cuſtom of the people, ſaying,

ſaying, "I am a true man, that is, I do not "fear death; but I pity the fate of a wife and "four children, whom I leave behind me very "young, and of my father and mother, who "are old, and for whom I got ſubſiſtence by "hunting *. I recommend them to the French, "becauſe I die for having taken their part."

He had hardly ſpoken the laſt word of this ſhort and pathetic ſpeech, when his good and tender father, penetrated with his ſon's filial love, got up, and ſpoke to the following effect: "It is through courage † that my ſon dies; but "being young, and full of vigour, he is more "fit than myſelf to provide for his mother, wife, "and four little children; it is therefore neceſ- "ſary he ſhould ſtay on earth to take care of "them. As to myſelf, I am near the end of my "career, I have lived long enough, and I wiſh my "ſon may come to the ſame age, in order to "educate my little children. I am no longer fit "for any thing, ſome years of life more or "leſs are indifferent to me. I have lived as a "man,

* He was the beſt hunter in the nation.

† Courage is a word which, in their language, ſignifies ſomething great or extraordinary.

"man, and will die as ſuch; therefore I go to "take his place *,"

At theſe words, which expreſſed paternal affection in a very ſtrong and moving manner, his wife, his ſon, his daughter-in-law, and their little children, ſhed tears round the brave old man; he embraced them for the laſt time, and exhorted them to be faithful to the French, and to die rather than to betray them by any meanneſs unworthy of his blood: at laſt he told them, that his death was a neceſſary ſacrifice to the nation, which he was contented and proud to make. With theſe words he preſented his head to the relations of the dead *Chactaw*, and they accepted it: after that he laid himſelf on the trunk of a tree, and they cut off his head immediately with one ſtroke of a hatchet.

Every thing was made up by this death; but the young man was obliged to give them his father's head †; in taking it up, he ſaid to it, "Pardon

* Theſe nations follow the *lex talionis*, death is avenged by death; and it is ſufficient to ſubſtitute any one of the nation, if even he were not a relation of the criminal; ſlaves only are excepted.

† They put it on a pole, and carried it as a trophy into their tribe.

"Pardon me thy death, and remember me in "the country of ſpirits." All the French who aſſiſted at this tragic event were moved to tears, and admired the heroic conſtancy of this venerable old man, whoſe virtue is equal to that celebrated Roman orator, who, in the time of of the triumvirate, was hidden by his ſon. The latter was cruelly tormented, in order to extort from him the place where his father was concealed, who, being no longer able to bear that ſo tender and ſo virtuous a ſon ſhould ſuffer ſo much, came to preſent himſelf to the murderers, and begged the ſoldiers to kill him, and to ſave his ſon's life; the ſon conjured them to kill him, but to ſpare his father; the ſoldiers, more barbarous than the ſavage Indians, killed them both together, at the ſame time, and in the ſame place.

M. *Ferrand*, my fellow-traveller in my laſt voyage to the *Illinois*, fell into the *Miſſiſippi* in the ſevereſt ſeaſon, whilſt his ſoldiers were exerciſing; and, at the very moment that the rapidity of this river carried him into an abyſs, an *Akanza* hunter, who was happily on board his boat, ſaved him from the precipice. The officer told him, that he hoped to recompenſe him generouſly for this piece of ſervice; but the Indian

dian immediately anſwered, that he had only done the duty of a brother, who ought to ſuccour the unhappy in time of danger; that, as the *Great Spirit* had taught him to ſwim like a fiſh, he could not employ his ſkill better than to ſave the life of his fellow-creature.

All the Indians, both men and women, learn to ſwim from their infancy. I have often ſeen the mothers put their little children into pools of freſh water, and I took great delight in ſeeing the little creatures ſwim naturally. Would not ſuch an education be better than thoſe methods which people are ſo fond of in Europe? The queſtion I ſpeak of here is of the utmoſt conſequence, eſpecially in a country where almoſt every body goes by water, and on ſea-voyages. I ſhall not enter into theſe details, which might prove tireſome: I ſhall only ſay, that, according to ſound reaſon, the firſt thing which it is neceſſary to know in nature, is how to preſerve one's exiſtence; and that it is to be wiſhed, that the European mothers would imitate the Americans in that particular, and likewiſe in ſuckling their own children. This action, which is dictated by nature, would prevent many accidents with regard to children ſuppoſed to be legitimate; and, without quoting many facts

to this purpoſe from the *Cauſes Celebres*, I have a recent example before my eyes of the confuſion often cauſed in families by thoſe mercenary nurſes. A gentleman, who was an officer of the ſame detachment which I was in, had long been ſuppoſed to be loſt by his nurſe. As ſoon as he was born, he was ſent down into the midſt of *Normandy*; and his relations have only found him out, when he was twenty-two years old, through mere chance, after he had gone through a ſeries of miſeries and dangers during that time.

I remember, that, in 1749, upon the road between *Paris* and *Arpajon*, I was witneſs of an accident which happened to one of the little victims which parents put from them, in order not to be importuned by their cries. The nurſe who was truſted with this child, had put it in her apron; as ſhe was ſtepping into one of thoſe carriages deſtined for theſe journies, her apron, which was tied behind, got untied, and the child fell upon the pavement, and expired.

Give me leave to ſay, that there is an entire difference between the way of thinking of the European and the Indian women. The latter would think themſelves abuſed, if they were to

leave

leave their children to the care of a woman far from their own inſpection: they are not afraid, as ſome European women, that their huſband's tenderneſs will diminiſh, becauſe they have borne the tokens of their mutual affection; on the contrary, the flame increaſes on both parts, and the pleaſure of ſeeing their race perpetuated, and to ſee another ſelf grow up in a little creature which they brought into the world, amply repays the trouble they have of ſupporting them.

The white women, whom we call *Creoles*, follow in *America* the European cuſtom, diſdaining to ſuckle their own children; they give them, as ſoon as they are born, to a tawny or red ſlave, without reflecting, that her blood may be corrupted. Many able phyſicians have demonſtrated, that the milk has an influence on the inclinations of the children. I have often ſeen many an innocent fall a victim to the irregular life of their nurſes in *America*; which is a circumſtance fatal to the propagation of the human ſpecies. I leave this ſubject to the gentlemen of the faculty, who will certainly handle it better than myſelf.

I conclude, by aſſuring you that I am, *&c.*

P. S. An

P. S. An Indian courier has juſt brought us the agreeable news of the taking of *Choaguen*, and the places dependent on it, upon the famous lake *Ontario*.

The garriſon of that place, to the number of fifteen hundred regular troops, have ſurrendered priſoners of war; and have accepted the articles of capitulation which M. *de Montcalm* has granted them; that general immediately ſent the five pair of regimental colours which he found in the place to *Quebec*.

M. *Rigaud**, the governor of *Trois Rivieres*, commanded the Canadians and Indians; he had taken poſſeſſion of an advantageous poſt, in order to oppoſe all ſuccours, and cut off the retreat of the enemy.

The land troops, thoſe of the colonies, the Canadians, and the Indians, have all equally diſtinguiſhed themſelves: we know not yet the number of men which the enemies have loſt; all we have heard is, that their general was killed at

* Brother of the Marquis of *Vaudreuil*, who returned into *America* with the title of Governor-General of *Canada* and *New France*.

at the beginning of the attack: we, on our ſide, have loſt but three ſoldiers. M. *de Bourlamaque*, a colonel of foot, has been ſlightly wounded, together with ſeven or eight Canadians; but unhappily M. *Decomble*, the engineer, was ſhot by one of our own Indians, who took him for an Engliſhman, on account of his uniform, which was different from that of the other French officers.

The Marquis *de Montcalm* is now employed in deſtroying the forts of *Choaguen*, and in ſending the proviſions and ammunition, and a hundred pieces of cannon which have been found there, to *Frontenac*.

At the Illinois, the 21ſt of July 1756.

LETTER IX.

To the ſame.

The Author ſets outs from the Koakias for Fort Chartres. His Obſervations on the Population. Account of a Caravan of Elephants arrived in the Neighbourhood of the Ohio.

SIR,

ACcording to all appearances, this is the laſt letter I ſhall write to you from the *Illinois*; I prepare to ſet out by order of the phyſicians, who have judged it neceſſary that I ſhould return to France, to uſe the baths of *Bourbon*, in order to prevent the bad conſequences of a ſhot I received, many years ago, at the aſſault of *Chateau Dauphin* *.

Yeſter-

* This is a fort in Piedmont, at the top of a mountain of the

Yeſterday an expreſs arrived here from Fort *du Quêne* to our commander, who informs us, that the Engliſh make great preparations to come to attack that poſt again. M. *de Macarty* has ſent proviſions to victual the fort. The Chevalier *de Villiers* commands it in my ſtead, my bad ſtate of health not allowing me to undertake that voyage; it would have enabled me to examine the place on the road, where an Indian found ſome elephant's teeth, of which he gave me a grinder, weighing about ſix pounds and a half.

In 1735, the Canadians who came to make war upon the *Tchicachas* (Chickſaws) found, near the *fine river* or *Ohio*, the ſkeletons of ſeven elephants; which makes me believe, that *Louiſiana* * joins to Aſia, and that theſe elephants came from the latter continent by the weſtern part, which we are not acquainted

 with:

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the Alps. It was taken the 19th of July 1744, under the command of the Prince of Conti.

The brigade of Poitou, commanded by the brave M. *de Chevert*, diſtinguiſhed itſelf in this action by an uncommon valour, which has been admired by all Europe.

* The French ſet no bounds to the weſtward to Louiſiana. F.

with: a herd of these animals having lost their way, probably entered the new continent, and having always gone on main land and in forests, the Indians of that time not having the use of fire arms, have not been able to destroy them entirely; it is possible that seven arrived at the place near the *Ohio*, which, in our maps of *Louisiana*, is marked with a cross. The elephants, according to all appearance, were in a swampy ground, where they sunk in by the enormous weight of their bodies, and could not get out again, but were forced to stay there *.

In 1752, the Baron *Porneuf*, who commanded Fort *François* in the country of the *Missouris*, received the skin of an animal from the Indians, which was hitherto unknown in *America*. That officer sent it to the Marchioness *de Vaudreuil*, who made a muff of it: this creature was about twice as big as an European fox, and its hair as fine

* It appears from modern geographical observations, that our author's supposition of a migration of elephants is improbable and it is further confirmed by the examination of the teeth of these animals, which are very different from those of the common elephant, and consequently they cannot be of the same species. See Kalm's Travels, vol. I. p. 135. Philosoph. Trans. vol. LVIII. and Pennant's Synopsis of Quadrupeds, p. 91. F.

fine and ſoft as velvet, mottled with black and pearly white.

Many authors pretend, that it is poſſible that people went through *Nova Zembla*, (ſituated northward of the ancient continent) over the ice to *Greenland*; they think, that this is the track on which thoſe went who firſt peopled *America*, and that the ſtreights which ſeparate it from the continent, has high mountains of ice on its eaſtern ſhore: but all thoſe who have tried to go to India through this northern part, have been eaten by white bears, or have periſhed amidſt the ice.

This is my obſervation on the ſubject: if men did go through thoſe parts to inhabit *North America*, they probably would have preferred *Canada*, *New England*, and *Louiſiana*, the northern parts of which are analogous to their country; whereas it is known, that when the French and Engliſh diſcovered *North America*, there were but few inhabitants in it; but, on the contrary, the Spaniards who conquered *Peru* and *Mexico*, found kings and emperors, who ſet on foot great armies, and who annually ſacrificed twenty thouſand captives to their falſe deities. Therefore there is reaſon to believe, that men went from

the weſt to *Mexico* and *Louſiana* *. The elephants who came thither are a proof which confirms my obſervations †. Further, when I aſked the Indians called *Sioux des prairies*, who are a nomadic nation, they told me, that they had heard other Indians ſay, that, to the weſtward of their country, there lived a nation of clothed people, who navigated on great ſalt-water lakes with great piraguas ‡; that they inhabited great villages built with white ſtones; that the inhabitants obeyed one deſpotic grand chief, who ſent great armies into the field.

The *Mexicans* adore idols as the Indians do; the *Natches* Indians had a temple, and a kind of ſervice; in their language intelligent people have found Chineſe words. Some Indians cut off their hair, leaving only a tuft as the crown of

* *Louiſiana* formerly touched *Canada* on the north-eaſt, *Florida* and the *Engliſh colonies* on the eaſt, and *New Mexico* on the weſt ſide. Its north-weſt boundaries were not determined. See more on this ſubject in a note to Kalm's Travels, vol. III. p. 125. F.

† But this proof does not hold good. See the note on p. 180.

‡ The Indians call the ſea a great lake, and the ſhips great piraguas.

of a friar, to which they faſten feathers of various colours. They never cut their nails; and among the Chineſe it is a mark of nobility to let the nails grow very long.

If we ſuppoſe that men went over from our continent to *America*, they would have kept their white colour, ſince we ſee, that, during two centuries and a half after *Columbus* diſcovered this new world, the Europeans who ſettled in it preſerve their white complexion from generation to generation. The animals which have been found there are entirely different from ours, and neither *Pliny* nor any other old naturaliſt ſpeak of them. We muſt be contented with admiring the works of the Creator, without deſiring to dive into his myſteries *.

* This way of arguing is very ſtrange, and greatly promotes barbariſm. Man has got reaſon for the purpoſe, that truth ſhould be the object of his enquiries; and if he ſhould carry them no further, out of fear to dive too deep into the myſteries of the Creator, this would patronize ignorance and barbariſm. Many a thing, which ſeemed too abſtruſe, has been diſcovered by an indefatigable application. The way in which America was peopled, and the manner in which the ſkeletons of great bulky animals approaching to the kind of elephants came to the river *Ohio*, are now a myſtery, but may one day or other be diſcovered by a lucky accident, or a great and original genius. F.

I ſhall add here, by the way, that when the Spaniards diſcovered the iſles of *St. Domingo* and *Cuba*, they found them well peopled with Indians, whom they murdered under pretence of a religious principle, but really in order to get their gold. Therefore a Cacique or petty king of the iſland, eſcaping from the Spaniards, gave his people to underſtand, that gold was the deity of their enemies, ſince they came ſo far, and expoſed themſelves to ſo many dangers, in order to get poſſeſſion of it; and that it was neceſſary they ſhould abandon every thing, in order to be left in quiet. Another Cacique being condemned to be burnt by the inquiſition, was ſolicited by a Jeſuit to become a Chriſtian, in order to go to Paradiſe; but he openly declared he would not go there, if there were any Spaniards in it. Theſe unhappy Indians abhorred the Spaniards ſo much, that they did not even converſe with their wives for fear of begetting ſlaves to ſuch maſters: and whenever they eat of their fleſh, it was more through revenge than any appetite; for they plainly ſaid, that the fleſh of a Spaniard was good for nothing.

I forgot to tell you in my laſt, that I have been invited to the feaſt of war, given by the grand chief of the *Illinois*, in order to raiſe warriors,

riors, and march with the Chevalier *Villiers*. This gentleman obtained leave from the governor to raiſe a party of French and Indians, and to go with them to avenge the death of his brother, M. *de Jumonville*, who was killed by the Engliſh before the war broke out.

The grand chief of the *Illinois* is called *Papapé-changouhias*; he is related to ſeveral Frenchmen of diſtinction, ſettled among theſe people. This Cacique ſucceeded Prince *Tamaroas* ſurnamed *Chikagou*, who died in 1754. He wears the medal of the late Cacique: this *Illinois* prince has convinced the French, that he is worthy of wearing it, by his friendſhip for our nation. The detachment of the Chevalier *de Villiers* * being ready to ſet out, *Papapé-changou-*

hias

* The Chevalier *de Villiers*, who commanded this detachment, muſt not be confounded with M. *de Villiers*, called the *Great Villiers*, who went to avenge the death of *Jumonville* immediately after his murder in 1753. See the poem which the famous M. *Thomas* wrote on this ſubject.

Of the ſeven brothers who compoſed this family of *Villiers*, ſix were killed in Canada in defence of their country. The Chevalier *de Villiers* is the laſt; he was taken priſoner in the action at *Ntagara* in 1759, being in the party of M. *Aubry*: this officer had defeated a body of Engliſh troops at Fort *du Queſne*.

kias desired to serve him as a guide with his warriors. They left Fort *Chartres* on the first of April 1756, and arrived, towards the end of May, on the boundaries of *Virginia*, where the English had a little fort surrounded with great pales. The Indians came near it in the night-time, each having a fascine of resinous combustible wood, which they set on fire close to the pales of the fort. The English commanding officer, appearing to give orders for putting out the fire, was aimed at by an Indian, who killed him on the spot. The same Indian called out in their language: "Surrender, you Eng-"lish dogs, or else you shall be burnt or eaten." The soldiers, intimated by his threats, and being without a commander, surrendered at discretion the next morning; the Indians then bound them two by two, like captives, except the serjeant, whom one of the Indians found out to be the person who had beaten him with a stick in time of peace. The poor serjeant became the victim of the resentment of these barbarians, who burnt him without any mercy. I have already said, that the Indians never forgive, and that they think themselves free and independent: therefore one must take care not to strike them, for they revenge themselves sooner or later.

The

The Engliſh priſoners, to the number of forty, taken in the fort, were divided among the French and Indians, who ſtripped them according to their cuſtom, plucked out their beards and hair, and, at the requeſt of the French, they only made them ſlaves. But the French officers, and the humaneſt among the French inhabitants of the *Illinois*, joined together, and releaſed them, by making a preſent to that nation who treated their priſoners like dogs, only becauſe they were our enemies, and becauſe they thought of making themſelves great with us *.

From the village of the *Koakias* we arrived at the *Peorias*, allies of the *Illinois*, through a fine large meadow, which is twenty-five leagues long. The ſavages who were with me, killed ſome little birds with ſticks, and called them ſtrawberry-bills. Theſe birds, whoſe plumage is varied with many colours, are as good to eat as the *beccafigos* in Provence. The Indians told me, that they are birds of flight or of paſſage, and that they aſſemble in flocks every year like ſparrows,

* From a natural kind of antipathy between the two nations, the French take every opportunity to depreſs the Engliſh, and to raiſe themſelves above them, ſometimes at the expence of truth. F.

ſparrows, to feed on the ſtrawberries in this meadow, which is red all over with them in the ſeaſon. The village of the *Peorias* is ſituated on the banks of a little river, and fortified after the American manner, that is ſurrounded with great pales and poſts.

When we were arrrived there, I enquired for the hut of the grand chief; they brought me to a great hut, where the whole nation was aſſembled, on account of a party of their warriors, who had been beaten by the *Foxes*, their mortal enemies.

I was well received by the Cacique and his firſt warriors, who came one after another to ſqueeze me by the hand in ſign of friendſhip, ſaying, *hau, hau!* which ſignifies, *you are welcome*, or I am glad to ſee you. A young Indian or a ſlave, lighted the calumet of peace, and the chief gave it to me to ſmoke out of, according to the common cuſtom.

After the firſt ceremonies were over, they brought me a calebaſh full of the vegetable juice of the maple tree. The Indians extract it in January, making a hole at the bottom of it, and apply a little tube to that. At the firſt thaw,

they

they get a little barrel full of this juice, which they boil to a ſyrup: and being boiled over again, it changes into a reddiſh ſugar, looking like *Calabrian manna*; the apothecaries juſtly prefer it to the ſugar which is made of ſugar canes. The French who are ſettled at the *Illinois* have learnt from the Indians to make this ſyrup, which is an exceeding good remedy for colds, and rheumatiſms.

At the end of the ſeſſion of this aſſembly, they brought a kind of bread which they call *Pliakmine*, bears paws, and beavers tails; I likewiſe eat of the dog's fleſh through complaiſance, for I have made it a rule to conform occaſionally to the genius of the people, with whom I am obliged to live, and to affect their manners, in order to gain their friendſhip: they likewiſe brought in a diſh of boiled gruel, of maize flour, called *Sagamité*, ſweetened with ſyrup of the maple tree; it is an Indian diſh which is tolerably good and refreſhing. At the end of the repaſt, they ſerved a deſert of a kind of dry fruits which our Frenchmen call *bluets*, and which are as good as Corinth raiſins; they are very common in the *Illinois* country.

The

The next day I saw a great croud in the plain: this assembly was for making a dance in favour of their new *Manitou*; the priests were dressed in a remarkable manner: their bodies were covered with a clay in which they had made burlesque drawings, and their faces were painted red, blue, white, yellow, green and black. The high priest had a bonnet of feathers, like a crown on his head, and a pair of horns of a wild goat, * to set the feathers off. I own the appearance of this prelate tempted me to laugh; but as these ceremonies are serious, one must take care, not to burst out, because it would be reckoned a want of religion, and an indecent action amongst them: nor do the Indians ever interrupt the Roman Catholics, in the exercise of religion. But what a sight presented itself to my eyes; I saw a living monster considered as a divinity: I was at the door of the temple of this false deity; the master of the ceremonies begged me to go in; I was not yet sufficiently acquainted with their customs, and shewed some reluctance, but one of the Indians who accompanied me, perceiving it, told me, that if I did not go in, the people would take it as an offence,

* These animals are found at the *Missouris*, their horns are of a fine black, and bent backwards.

fence, or at leaſt as a contempt. This diſcourſe determined me and I went in *: this is the picture of their *Manitou*; his head hung upon his ſtomach, and looked like a goat's, his ears were like a lynx's ears, with the ſame kind of hair, his feet, hands, thighs and legs were in form like thoſe of a man: this falſe divinity ſeemed to be about ſix months old, the Indians found it in the woods at the foot of a ridge of mountains, called the mountains of *Sainte Barbe*, which communicate to the rich mines of *Santa Fé* in *Mexico*. The general aſſembly was called together on purpoſe to invoke the protection of this monſter againſt their enemies.

I let theſe poor people know, that their *Manitou* was an evil genius, as a proof of it, I added, that he had permitted the nation of *Foxes*, who were their moſt cruel enemies, to gain a victory over ſome of their countrymen; that they ought to quit him as ſoon as poſſible, and

* The maſter of the ceremonies, or prieſt, that is appointed to guard the temple, before he made his offerings, anointed his body with roſin; he then ſtrewed the ſoft feathers of a ſwan, or the hair of a beaver all over this melted gum, and in that ridiculous plight he danced in honour of the falſe deity.

and be revenged on him. They anſwered, *tika-labé, houé nigué*, i. e. we believe thee, thou art in the right. They then voted that he ſhould be burnt, and the great prieſt pronounced his ſentence, which, according to the interpreter's explanation, was conceived in theſe terms: "Monſter, ariſen from the excrements of the evil ſpirit, to be fatal to our nation, who has wrongfully taken thee for her *Manitou*; thou haſt paid no regard to the offerings which we have made thee, and haſt allowed our enemies, whom thou doſt plainly protect, to overcome a party of our countrymen, and to make them ſlaves: therefore our old men aſſembled in council have unanimouſly decreed and with the advice of the chief of the white warriors, that to expiate thy ingratitude towards us, thou ſhalt be burnt alive." At the end of this ſentence all the aſſembly ſaid, *hou, hou, hou, hou.*

As I wiſhed to get this monſter, becauſe I could not get that ſnake I ſpoke to you of before, I took the following method: I went to the prieſt, made him a ſmall preſent, and bid my interpreter tell him, that he ſhould perſuade his countrymen, that if they burnt this evil genius, there might ariſe one from his aſhes which would

could prove fatal to them; and that I would go on purpoſe a-croſs the great lake in order to deliver them of it. He found my reaſons good, and by means of the little preſent I gave him, he got the ſentence changed, and he was ordered to be killed with clubs: As I deſired to have the monſter, without being mutilated, I informed them that they muſt deliver it to my people, who would ſtrangle it; for if any of their nation killed it, ſome misfortune or other might happen to him from it. They ſtill approved my reaſons, and delivered the animal to me, on condition that I ſhould carry it far from their country. It was accordingly ſtrangled; but having neither ſpirits of wine nor brandy to preſerve it in, I was obliged to get it diſſected, in order to be able to bring it to France, to ſatisfy your curioſity in regard to ſubjects of natural hiſtory *.

I ſhall finiſh this letter by another account of the ſuperſtition of theſe people, and of the divine ſervice they give to horrid animals. In

* The ſkeleton of this monſter, or falſe divinity, is now in the natural hiſtory cabinet of M. *de Fayolles*, clerk of the office of the American colonies belonging to the French.

1756 there arrived a deputation of Indians at Fort *Chartres*, of the nation of *Miſſouris**; there was an old woman among them, who paſſed for a magician; ſhe wore round her naked body, a living rattle ſnake, whoſe bite is mortal, if the remedy is not applied the moment after.

This prieſteſs of the devil, ſpoke to the ſerpent, which ſeemed to underſtand what ſhe ſaid: I ſee, ſaid ſhe, thou art weary of ſtaying here; go, then, return home, I ſhall find thee at my return: the reptile immediately ran into the woods, and took the road of the *Miſſouris*. If I had been inclined to be ſuperſtitious, I ſhould have told you that I had ſeen the devil appear to theſe nations under the figure of a ſnake. Many Miſſionaries have been willing to perſuade us in their relations and edifying letters, that the devil appears to theſe people, in order to be adored by them, but it is eaſy to ſee, that there is nothing preternatural in it, and that it is a mere juggle.

You

* A nation living to the weſtward of *Louiſiana*, on a river which bears their name, and falls into the *Miſſiſippi*.

You know beſides, that all animals, even the moſt ferocious, are tamed by man, I do not pretend to ſay that the ſnake of the pretended witch went into her country. All I can tell you is, that I always had a very great antipathy againſt theſe animals, and that when I meet with them, I take a pleaſure in cruſhing their heads.

I remember, that in the village of the *Péanguichias*, a nation allied to the *Illinois*, one of our ſoldiers was very near getting into a very bad ſcrape. He went into an Indian hut and found a live ſnake, which he killed with a hatchet, not knowing that the maſter of the hut had made his *Manitou* of it. The Indian arrived at the ſame time in a terrible paſſion to find his deity dead; he aſſerted that it was the ſoul of his father, who died about a year before; he having ſhot two ſerpents which were pairing upon the point of a rock, fell ſick and died ſoon after.

The imagination of the old man being troubled by the height of the fever, he thought he ſaw the two ſnakes coming to reproach him with their death; he therefore recommended it to his ſon in dying, never to kill any of theſe ani-

mals, fearing that they would likewiſe be the cauſe of his death *. Knowing the genius of theſe people, I adviſed the ſoldier, whom the Indian looked upon as one who had ſlain a deity, to pretend to be drunk, and to do as if he would kill me and his comrades. The Indians, not knowing that it was only a farce, were the firſt to cry out, that the white warrior † had loſt his wits. I aſked for cords to tie him; and as I ſeemed very angry with him, the chiefs and the warriors came to intercede for him, ſaying that it was a man who had loſt his ſenſes by drinking; that the ſame often happened to the red men: in order to give more colour to the impoſture, I waited yet for the Cacique's wife to beg me, and appeared pacified in deference to her ſex, which I reſpected very much.

I preſented the maſter of the ſnake with a bottle of brandy, to drown his grief. The Indians

* I have ſeen a peaſant in France, who had killed an owl on his neighbour's roof; and his father dying ſome time after, he believed that his death was cauſed by that bird of ill preſage.

† So they call our ſoldiers.

Indians are exceſſively fond of this liquor, and grow furious when they have drank too much of it. After their drunkenneſs is over, they ſay that they have neither ſpoken nor done any thing, and attribute all their follies to the brandy believing to juſtify their conduct by acknowledging that they had loſt their wits. When a drunken Indian kills another, the death is not revenged. But theſe people take care ſeldom or never to drink all at once, thoſe who are ſober keep in bounds the reſt, and the women hide both offenſive and defenſive weapons. Brandy may be reckoned among the pernicious things which have contributed towards the depopulation of North America: this liquor makes men brutes, and often kills them. I have ſometimes ſeen drunken Indians kill each other with hatchets and clubs.

I am now ready to leave the *Illinois*, and expect to be in *New Orleans* in January 1757. This letter ſets out in a piragua, which M. *de Macarty* ſends with diſpatches to the governor.

I am, &c.

At the Illinois, the 10*th*
November 1756.

LETTER X.

To the same.

The Author leaves the Illinois: His Navigation down the Mississippi: he encamps in an Island formed by that River. His Soldiers make him Governor of it.

SIR,

YOU inquire, whether the Indians have captains amongst them, and whether they are governed by a king? The time I have spent among them procures me the pleasure of satisfying your curiosity on that head. You must know, then, that they are divided into tribes or nations, each of which is governed by a petty king or Cacique, who only depends on the *Great Spirit*, or Supreme Being; these Caciques reign despotically, without making their authority odious, and know how to make themselves

ſelves reſpected and beloved. They likewiſe have the ſatisfaction of being regarded by their ſubjects almoſt as demi-gods, born for the happineſs of this world; for they have the tenderneſs of fathers for the people of their tribe; and that name flatters them much more than all the pompous titles of the *Grand Signior* or the *Great Mogul*. Thoſe Aſiatic emperors are often expoſed in their extenſive dominions to revolutions, by which their life is endangered; for often tributary kings rebel againſt them, and kill them with their whole family.

The crime of high treaſon is unknown among the *Americans*; the chiefs and Caciques go every where without fear. If any one ſhould be bold enough to attempt any thing againſt their lives, he would be puniſhed as a horrible monſter, and the whole family of the murderer would be exterminated without mercy.

As to the captains or chiefs of war, who command their armies againſt their enemies, this poſt is occupied only by ſuch as have given ſignal proofs of courage in defence of their country in ſeveral combats; and as the generals go naked, as well as the other Indians, the marks of wounds they bear upon their body are ſuffi-

cient to diſtinguiſh them from the reſt, and ſerve inſtead of teſtimonials to them.

The old men, who cannot go to war any more, are not uſeleſs to the nation. They hold ſpeeches, and the people hear them as oracles. Every thing is done as they adviſe it; and the young men ſay, that they having lived longer than themſelves, muſt of courſe have more experience and knowledge. When I admired the countenance which theſe old men enjoyed, they told me, that ſince they could no longer fight for their country, they taught others to defend it. The warriors, when they return from an expedition, never fail to throw part of the booty into the huts of thoſe old men, who have exhorted them, and excited their courage. The priſoners of war are always given to the oldeſt people in the nation, who make them their ſlaves. The old warriors who cannot go to war any more, harangue the ſoldiers. The orator begins with ſtriking againſt the poſt with a club, and mentions all the fine actions he has done in war, that is, how many ſcalps he has taken from different nations. The hearers anſwer, *hau, hau, i. e.* that is true. The Indians abhor lying, and ſay that a liar is not a true man.

The

The old ſpeaker begins his diſcourſe, and ſays: "If I were younger and more vigorous, "to conduct you againſt our enemies, as I have "formerly done, you ſhould ſee me go on the "tips of my toes. Go my comrades, as men "of courage, and with the heart of a lion *; "never ſhut your ears, ſleep like hares, go "like the roe-buck, do not fear the cold, nor "heſitate to go into the water like ducks; "when you are purſued, hide well your retreat. "Above all, do not fear the arrows of your ene- "mies, ſhew them that you are true warriors "and men. Laſtly, when you find an oppor- "tunity, uſe all your arrows on the enemy, and "after that break in upon them with your clubs "in hand; ſtrike, ſlay, and extirpate; it is "better to die fighting than to be taken and "burnt."

At the end of this harangue, the old warrior preſents the calumet to the *Tachà-Mingo*, that is, the general or chief of war, and to all his officers, who ſmoke it, each after their rank; and all thoſe who have not yet been to war come to ſmoke

* An hyperbole no Indian in America would make uſe of, not knowing that creature, which is not to be met with in that country. F.

ſmoke it, by way of enliſting themſelves; they dance the dance of war, and, after that ceremony, they diſtribute dog's fleſh, which, as I have already obſerved, is a diſh principally appropriated to warriors *.

M. *du Tiſſenet* told me of an accident that happened to his father, who was one of the firſt officers that came to *Louiſiana* with M. *de Bienville*. M. *du Tiſſenet* being at an Indian nation, together with ſome Frenchmen who came to barter goods; the Indians wanted to ſcalp them; M. *du Tiſſenet* had learnt their language, and heard their diſcourſe, and as he wore a wig, he took it from his head, and threw it on the ground, ſaying from time to time, You will have my ſcalp, take it up, if you dare to do it. The aſtoniſhment of theſe people was inexpreſſible, for M. *du Tiſſenet* had got his head ſhaved a little before this happened; he told them afterwards, that they were very much in the wrong to attempt to hurt him, for he only came to make an

* It is very remarkable, that, when the ancient kings of *Macedonia* performed the luſtration of their armies, a dog was killed, and divided into two parts, and the whole army, with the king at their head, went through the two halves of the dog. F.

an alliance with them; that, if they compelled him, he would burn the water in their lakes and rivers, to hinder them from sailing, and set fire to their forests; he got a little pot, and put some brandy in it, and set it on fire with a match; the Indians, who were not yet acquainted with brandy, were amazed; at the same time he took out of his pocket a convex glass, and set fire to a rotten tree by means of the sun. These people really believed, that the officer had the power of burning their rivers and their woods; they caressed him, loaded him with presents, and sent him home well escorted, that no one might do him any harm. Since that time M. *de Bienville* has made use of M. *du Tissenet* in several negociations towards making alliances with the Indians.

M. *du Tissenet*'s adventure puts me in mind of that of an Italian, who was in the suite of M. *Tonty*, the then governor of Fort *Louis* among the *Illinois*. This Italian set out from thence by land, to join M. *de la Salle*, to whom he could have been very useful, by teaching him the road which he was to take in order to come to the *Mississippi*, if he could have been with him in time; he likewise saved his life by a singular stratagem. Some Indians being willing to kill him,

him, he told them they were much in the wrong in attempting to deſtroy a man that bore them all in his heart. This diſcourſe amazed the Barbarians; he aſſured them, that, if they would give him time till the next morning, he would convince them of the truth of what he had aſſerted; adding, that if he deceived them, they ſhould do what they pleaſed with him. Then, fixing a little mirror on his breaſt, the Indians, who were much ſupriſed to ſee themſelves, as they imagined, in the heart of this man, granted him his life.

I have commanded the convoy in deſcending the river, which M. *Aubri* brought up: M. *de Macarty* truſted the Engliſh priſoners to my care to bring them to *New Orleans*; they are the ſame which the Chevalier *de Villiers* and the Indian chief *Papéchangouhia* took. I have made haſte to come to the capital before the thawing of the ice, which breaks looſe in the northern rivers, and follows the current; I ran the riſk of being ſtopt by it, if I had not given orders for rowing as hard as poſſible; I even made uſe of the Engliſh priſoners to relieve my ſoldiers: as every one has an equal right to his life on ſuch occaſions, the officers likewiſe lent a helping hand, to encourage the crew.

After

After paſſing the rocks at *Prudhomme**, there are no others in the *Miſſiſippi*; and when there are ſeveral boats, they are faſtened together, and go down with the current day and night. There is only one man at the helm, and one at the head of every boat, to take care of the floating trees. It is a pleaſure to go down this fine river: the ſame diſtance which, in going up, takes three months and a half, in deſcending is performed in ten or twelve days, when the water is high in the river.

I muſt not forget to mention, that on the firſt of January the ſoldiers come in the morning to wiſh their officers a happy new year, who generally return the civility by a preſent of brandy. I was juſt encamped on a little iſland about two leagues in circuit, ſituated on one of the branches of the *Miſſiſippi*, which I was deſcending. This iſle was ſurrounded with very tall trees. A facetious gaſcoon ſoldier, as thoſe of this nation generally are, gave his comrades to under-

* Theſe rocks form the ſhores of the *Miſſiſippi*, which are on both ſides like walls of five hundred feet high. Formerly there was the Fort *Prudhomme* in this place, ſo named from a fellow-traveller of M. *de la Salle*, who died there, and occaſioned the fort to be called after him.

underſtand that they might get an extraordinary new year's gift if they would perform the ceremony of receiving me governor of the iſland. The ſerjeant approved this droll thought, and immediately gave his orders for it. He began with graving my name on the bark of a tree, ordered the ſwivels to be charged with powder, and made the troops appear in arms. The drummer beat a whirl, and the ſerjeant as maſter of the ceremonies, taking off his hat, ſaid "*in the king's name* *, ye tygers, wolves, bears, "oxen, ſtags, roe-bucks, and other animals of "this iſland, ſhall acknowledge our commander "as your governor, and obey him in all that he "he ſhall command you for his ſervice;" one of the ſoldiers then fired the ſwivels of the boats, which were accompanied with a general ſalute from the ſmall arms. The ſudden exploſion of theſe fire arms, frightened the wild oxen, who went into the river in order to ſwim through it and to gain the continent: the ſoldiers went after them in a piragua and killed four of them, together with two roe-bucks that juſt reached the ſhore, and preſented them to me as my property, which obliged me to ſtay here in order to dry the fleſh for conſumption, during

* *De par le Roi.*

during the remaining part of our voyage. In order to take advantage of the fun of my ſoldiers, which I took good care to reward immediately, I had a mind to viſit the interior parts of my government: but I was hardly gone half a league, when I ſaw a bear, who was quietly eating acorns under a great oak: I fired my piece at him, but the ball only went into the lard of the animal, which was monſtrouſly fat; as ſoon as he felt the wound, he wanted to come up to me, but he was too heavy to run; then feigning to run from him, I drew him towards my ſoldiers, who ſoon ſurrounded and killed him as guilty of felony and rebellion. They held a court martial, where the ſerjeant preſided. The corporal, who acted as the king's attorney-general, gave it as his opinion, that in order not to ruin the fine coat of the bear, who had revolted againſt his maſter, he ſhould only be ſhot in the head, which was punctually executed.

He was then flayed, and I have taken his ſkin, which is a very black one, and which I ſhall not relinquiſh, any more than Hercules did that of the *Nemean* lion which he conquered.

The

The ſoldiers melted the fat, and got above one hundred and twenty pots of oil from it*, you muſt know that the bears come out of their holes as ſoon as the fruits begin to ripen, and they do not go in again till they are all eaten up. They then ſtay in their retreats till the next ſeaſon, and neither eat nor drink during that interval; their greaſe is the only thing they feed upon, by ſucking their paws. It is dangerous to meet a lean one without company. The Indians make a great trade with bears' ſkins, and treat their friends with their paws and tongues; they have often regaled me with them on my voyages, and I found them extremely good.

I direct this letter to *Campeach*, to M. *de Arragory*, the agent of the French marine, who will ſend it to *Cadiz*, from whence it will come ſafer to you than by our veſſels, as Spain is not at war with England: I do not write duplicates of this letter, beſides, I hope to ſet out for Europe next April.

I am, SIR, &c. &c.

At New Orleans, the 25th of February 1757.

LET-

* *Bears oil* is very good to eat, in *Louiſiana* they make uſe of it for ſallad, for frying, and for ſauces, and prefer it to hog's lard. The pot holds about two quarts Engliſh.

LETTER XI.

To the Same.

The Author ſets out for Europe. He fights an Engliſh Privateer. He embarks at Cape François on a Veſſel belonging to a Fleet of twenty-ſix Merchantmen, which were almoſt all taken in his Sight by Privateers. Taking of a little Veſſel from the Enemy. Arrival at Breſt.

SIR,

HAVING found no veſſel here to return to *France*, I was obliged to go on board the brigantine *Union* fitted out as a ſloop of war, and commanded by captain *Gau-Jean* who is well know for having taken five Engliſh ſhips during the war, on his voyage from France to *Louiſiana*.

We ſet ſail from the *Baliſe* on the firſt of April 1757, for Cape *François*. On the 20th of April being in ſight of *Turk*'s iſland *, we perceived a ſhip, which we ſuppoſed to belong to the enemy; ſhe chaſed us at night, and being a prime ſailer, came up with us in three hours' time: the Engliſh privateer ſaluted us with a bullet from his cannon, and called out to us to ſurrender to the king of England; to which we returned a broadſide, and a volley of the ſmall arms; after which I haled him to ſtrike his colours for the king of France, or elſe he ſhould be ſunk; the privateer finding that he had to meddle with a dealer in bullets, made off, and got among the rocks near Turk's iſland, hoping to draw us nearer to the ſhore, where we might have been loſt. But our captain, who was very prudent, and a good mariner at the ſame time, ſaw the ſnare which was laid for him; therefore, inſtead of following the privateer, he continued his voyage, and we happily arrived in the harbour of Cape *François* on the firſt of May. There we found the ſquadron of M. *de Beaufremont*, deſtined for the ſuccours of *Canada*, having on board M. *de Bart*, whom the king had appointed governor and lieutenant-general

* L'iſle *Turque*.

neral on the iſle of *St. Domingo*. My firſt care on going on ſhore was to pay my reſpects to him. That general, who is always ready to ſerve unfortunate officers, prevented my cares, by diſpatching me four days after my arrival, and ſparing me the expence I ſhould have been at if I had ſtayed on this iſland, he procured me a free paſſage at the king's expence, as a fleet of twenty-ſix merchantmen were ready to ſail for France, under the convoy of M. *de Beaufremont*, who brought them as far as the *Cayques* iſlands, where he left them, in order to proceed on his deſtination according to the orders of the court.

I muſt tell you that I preferably choſe a *Bordeaux* veſſel, called the *Sun*, captain *Odouoir*; (imitating the Indians, who indeed make a divinity of the ſun). But the event has ſhewn that I was very happy in my choice; for almoſt all the veſſels which compoſed the fleet have been taken in my ſight. Only four arrived in France, the *Sun* was the firſt: ſhe came to *Breſt* in forty-five days, after taking an Engliſh ſhip in the latitude of the *Newfoundland* bank. I landed at *Breſt* the fifteenth of June 1757, and immediately waited on the Count *du Guai*, commander of the marines in this port; I then paid a viſit to

M. *Hocquart*, the counſellor of ſtate and intendant of the marine in this department, whom I informed of the death of M. *Auberville*, who had ſucceeded for a time to M. *Michael de la Rouvilliere*, as commiſſary general of the marine, and regulator of the proviſions of * *Louiſiana*. M. *Hocquart* was known for his probity when he was intendant of *New France*; it is certain that he came back from thence indebted forty-thouſand livres, which the king, contented with his ſervices, has made him a preſent of; a fine example for M. *Bigot*, his ſucceſſor; but if he has not brought back treaſures from his adminiſtration, he has at leaſt the ſatisfaction of paſſing for one of the gallanteſt men of his rank: he has been regretted by all the Canadians, and even by the Indians, who, as I have already ſaid, know how to diſtinguiſh merit.

On owning to this gentleman, that I had no money to go to court with, he was ſo kind as to order M. *Gaucher*, clerk of the treaſurer of the colonies to give me ſome. He likewiſe offered me his table during my ſtay in this town, which I intend to leave the twenty-ſecond of this month.

You

* *Ordonnateur.*

You will, perhaps, be amazed to hear, that in the ſpace of eight months, I have ſeen two winters, two ſummers, and two ſprings; I ſhall now explain it to you. I wrote to you, that I left the *Illinois* at the end of December, 1756, when the *Miſſiſippi* began to freeze, and deſcending that great river, I came to *New Orleans* in January 1757, the climate of which is comparable to that of the *Hierian* iſlands, where our regiment was in 1744. That is, it was the ſeaſon of gardening or ſpring. I left *Louiſiana* the firſt of April 1757, and came to Cape *François* the firſt of May, and found ſummer there: I embarked for Europe on the fourth, and after coming out of the *Bahama Channel* we met with ſpring; continuing our voyage to the great ſands of *Newfoundland*, we ſaw on the twenty-ſecond, at ſun-riſing, a floating mountain of ice, which at firſt we took to be a ſail; but the keen air coming from it convinced us at laſt that it was a piece of ice from the frozen ocean. On the fifteenth of June 1757, we came to *Breſt*, where we found ſummer. This therefore is a pretty extraordinary caſe.

I am, SIR, &c.

At Breſt, the 18th of June 1757.

LETTER XII.

To the Same,

The Author arrives at Court, receives a Gratification from the King, and an Order to go to Rochefort. *He embarks there for Louiſiana.*

SIR,

I AM now once more at *Rochefort* from whence I ſailed for *Louiſiana*, eight years ago. I come from the court, where I preſented to the comptroller general and miniſter of the marine, M. *de Moras*, the governor's letter, which explains the motives of my voyage. He was ſo kind as to ſpeak with me in his cabinet, in preſence of M. *de la Porte*, chief of the

the board of plantations. He queſtioned me on the preſent ſtate of *Louiſiana*. I aſſured the miniſter that I had left in our intereſt all the nations of that vaſt continent, which I had viſited, and that the *Cherokees* were come to treat of peace with the French. He likewiſe aſked me, whether I thought the colony could be attacked. I anſwered that there was little probability of the Engliſh attempting to attack it, on account of the difficulty of coming in through the mouth of the *Miſſiſippi* at the fort of *Baliſe*; and that the colony wanted no other fortifications, than thoſe which nature had provided it with.

M. *de Moras* obtained for me from the king a gratification of a thouſand livres in order to enable me to go to the waters which my health required I ſhould take; after which I received an order from his majeſty to go back to *Louiſiana*, and continue my ſervices there; therefore I came hither without loſs of time in order to embark; we intend to ſet ſail as ſoon as the convoy will be fitted out for *Cape Breton*.

M. *Druis Imbuto* ſucceeds M. *Normant de Méſi*, as *Intendant* of the marine. The king

could not chooſe a better perſon both on account of his abilities, and of his integrity, and likewiſe on account of his zeal for the king's intereſt in this important place. This intendant made me the ſame offer as his predeceſſor.

I am, SIR, &c.

At Rochefort, the 12th of September 1757.

LETTER XIII.

To the ſame.

The Author leaves Rochefort; *he meets with three Engliſh Merchant-Ships, taken by M.* de Place, *of which one was burnt and another ſunk. He ſtops at the Iſle of* Grenada. *Navigation along* Jamaica.

SIR,

I Wrote to you from *Rochefort*, that we intended to ſet out in December 1757; but the convoy deſtined to ſuccour *Cape Breton* having in part been taken by the Engliſh fleet, we were obliged to fit out another. During that time a ſquadron of ten great Engliſh men of war having alarmed the coaſt of *Aunis*, that has retarded us till the month of *May*. This ſquadron diſappearing, we ſet ſail on the tenth of the ſame month.

I was

I was on board the King's frigate *La Fortune*, together with M. *de Rochemore*, commiſſary-general of the marine, and *ordonnateur* of the province of *Louiſiana*. M. *de Place*, a captain of a man of war, commanded the *Eopalme* frigate of thirty guns, deſtined for our convoy: we met with three Engliſh veſſels on our voyage, which only coſt us three cannon-ſhot. M. *de Place* ſunk one of them, and burnt the other, after taking the crew and the goods out of them. As to the third, it came from the coaſt of *Guinea*, was richly laden, and had on board four hundred and forty negroes, who were in part ſold to the iſle of *Grenada*. The Baron *de Bonvouſt*, who has juſt been appointed governor of this iſland, entertained us very generouſly and politely during our ſtay there. We remained there till the twenty-ſecond of July, when we ſailed for *Louiſiana*, keeping alongſide of *Jamaica*, to avoid the great ſhips of the enemy, which never come to thoſe ſhores: we took that courſe in order to deceive the ſpy, and we arrived happily at the mouth of the *Miſſiſippi* on the twelfth of Auguſt.

M. *de Rochemore* *, an honeſt *ordonnateur*, who is very zealous for the intereſt of the King, will have

* The brother of a M. *Rochmore* who is now commodore.

have a great deal of trouble in reforming the abuſes that have crept into the management of the colony's affairs, ſince the war; and during our voyage, I foretold him, that he would be much diſturbed in his adminiſtration: what I foreſaw really happened; and by the ſame ſhips which brought us hither, the court has been prejudiced againſt him, with a view to deprive him of his place. I was but juſt arrived at *New Orleans*, when the governor gave me orders to prepare to go with a detachment to the *Allibamons*, an Indian nation two hundred and fifty leagues from the capital. I take advantage of the opportunity of the King's ſhips, which will ſail for France at the end of the year; and I write to you by duplicates, that if one ſhip be taken, you may get the letter by the other. When I ſhall be informed of the manners of the nations which I ſhall paſs through, and which are ſituated to the eaſt of *New Orleans*, I ſhall deſcribe that country to you, which is reckoned very fine and very good.

At New Orleans, the 10th of November 1758.

LETTER XIV.

To the same.

The Author departs from New Orleans *for the* Allibamons. *His Navigation on the Lake* Pontchartrain. *Short Description of* Mobile.

SIR,

I Left *New Orleans* on the fourteenth of December, according to M. *de Kerlerec*'s orders, and set out for the *Allibamons*. I sailed from the little creek of *St. Jean*, which is situated in the lake *Pontchartrain*. There is a portage of about a quarter of a mile from *New Orleans* to this creek *, which is about two leagues long; the winds were favourable to us, and on the twentieth of December I arrived at

* *Bayouc*, a small inlet where the tide goes up.

at the bay and fort of *Mobile*, which is fifty leagues diſtant from the capital.

The *Mobile* was formerly the chief ſettlement in *Louſiana*, and the reſidence of the governor, *ordonnateur*, and of the chief officers. The ſuperior council held its ſittings there likewiſe.

There is a pretty regular fort, capable of reſiſting a whole army of Indians; but European troops could ſoon take it. It is ſituated on a bay where the tide comes up; and between two rivers, one of which is ſmall, and is called the river of the *Chactaws*, the other is more conſiderable than the *Seine* before *Rouen*, is called *Mobile* river, and riſes in the *Apalachian* mountains; it is the rendez-vous of all the Indians who live to the eaſtward. They come there to receive the preſents which the King annually diſtributes to them by his governor. The ſoil about *Mobile* is gravelly; however, the cattle ſucceeds exceedingly well there, and multiplies very much. The inhabitants are very laborious, and trade with the Spaniards; they go to the fort of *Penſacola*, which is near *Mobile*, and get ſalt beef, wild fowl, maize, rice, and other eatables from thence. The inhabitants of *Mobile* likewiſe carry on a trade with tar. As to the fur-

fur-trade with the Indians, the officers carry it on excluſively of all others, contrary to the King's intention.

About this place, there are white and red bays * and wild cherry-trees †. There are likewiſe white and red cedars ‡; the latter is very fine, and very good for inlaid work; its ſmell expels inſects, and the wood indeed is incorruptible. There are ſeveral ſorts of trees in the foreſts hereabouts, which are unknown in Europe, and ſome which abound with a gum like turpentine. There are likewiſe cypreſſes § of ſuch a ſize, that the Indians make piraguas out of one piece, which can contain ſixty men.

Before the French came into *Louiſiana*, the Indians conſtructed their boats in the following manner.

* The bays are probably the *Laurus æſtivalis Linn.* which have white flowers; and the *Laurus Borbonia Linn.* which has red flower-cups, and black or purple berries. F.

† The wild cherries of this country grow in cluſters, and there are chiefly three kinds of them growing in America, viz, *Prunus Virginiana, Canadenſis,* and *Luſitanica,* Linn.

‡ The red cedar is the *Juniperus Virginiana Linn.* and the white cedar is the *Cupreſſus Thyoides Linn.*

§ Or *cedars.*

manner. They went to the banks of ſome rivers, which are very numerous in this vaſt region, and which by their rapidity tear up by the roots the trees which ſtand on their banks. They took their dimenſions for length and breadth, and accordingly choſe ſuch a tree as they wanted; after which they ſet fire to it, and as the tree burnt on they ſcraped away the live coals with a flint or an arrow; and having ſufficiently hollowed it out, they ſet it afloat. They are very well ſkilled in conducting theſe little veſſels upon their lakes and rivers. They employ them in time of war, and likewiſe load them with the furs and dried fleſh which they bring back from their hunts.

Their inſtruments and their weapons were made in the following manner: they choſe a young tree for that purpoſe, in which they made an inciſion with a flint, or pebble as ſharp as a razor, and they put a ſtone cut in form of a hatchet into the inciſion; therefore, as the tree grew up, it enchaſed the ſtone, which by that means became inſeparable from it, and they afterwards cut it off in order to make uſe of it; their lances and their darts were made in the ſame manner. They had clubs of a very hard wood.

As

As to their inſtruments of agriculture, they only made uſe of the bones of animals, or of ſpades of a very hard wood. The ground throughout *America* is very fruitful; the graſs there grows high and cloſe; and after the froſt has dried it up, the Indians ſet fire to it; then they dig the ground with their ſpades, ſow it, and reap three months after their crops.

They plant maize, millet, beans, and other leguminous plants, potatoes, piſtachios, and water-melons; gourds are likewiſe very common there, and the French inhabitants call them *giromonds*.

Their kitchen-utenſils were diſhes and pots of earthen ware, and deep wooden diſhes. They made cups of calebaſhes, and ſpoons * of the horns of wild oxen, which they cut through the middle, and form into the proper ſhape by means of fire.

As ſoon as we ſhall have got ready the proviſions for our voyage, and for the garriſon of the fort, we ſhall ſet out, M. *Aubert* and myſelf in a boat armed with ſoldiers and *Mobile* Indians, whom

* Which they call *Micouens*.

whom we have hired to row during the voyage.

M. *Aubert*, though he is adjutant of the fort at *Mobile*, has been appointed, by M. *de Kerlerec*, to command Fort *Toulouſe* at the *Allibamons*, which is contrary to the King's order, forbidding all majors and adjutants to do other functions than thoſe of the place they belong to.

If any ſhips arrive from Europe, I ſhall perhaps receive letters from you. M. *de Velle*, who commands here, will be ſo kind as to ſend them to me with the firſt convoy.

I am, SIR, &c.

At Mobile, the 6th of January 1759.

LETTER XV.

To the ſame.

The Author ſets out from Mobile *for the* Allibamons. *Deſcription of the Manners of this Nation. Their Way of puniſhing Adultery.*

SIR,

I AM at laſt arrived at Fort *Toulouſe* among the *Allibamons*. I have been fifty days a-coming; becauſe, taking boat in the rainy ſeaſon, the water in the river was often ſwelled to twelve or fifteen feet; this ſudden increaſe was cauſed by the heavy rains, which are frequent hereabouts, and by the high hills that run along this river.

We have been obliged to work hard againſt the rapidity of the current, and there were days during which we ſcarcely advanced a league.

league. It is impoſſible to fail, on account of the woods, the hills, and turnings of the river; and therefore we could do no otherwiſe than go along the ſhores. One day I had the misfortune to ſee my boat hemmed in by the branches of a tree * that was ſet under water: we were benighted in this diſagreeable ſituation, and obliged to wait for the break of day. But as this river riſes and falls by the floods, I found myſelf now quite in the air in my boat. We were twenty-five leagues from the mouth of the river, and the *Mobilian* ſavages that accompanied me, comforted me by the hope that the next tide would ſet me a-float again; and really the tide mounting up the river from *Mobile* bay delivered us from our uncomfortable ſituation. You ſee by this, dear Sir, what a difference it makes in navigating an *European* and an *American* river.

M. *Aubert* fell ſick on the way, and I prevailed on him to ſtay at *Mobile* for the recovery of his health; and ſo he came from thence hither on horſeback, by croſſing the fir-woods, which

* There are hereabouts cedar-trees of ſo prodigious a ſize, that ten men can ſcarcely claſp them; which eaſily accounts for the goodneſs and fertility of the country, and beſides this its climate is one of the moſt healthy.

are very thin. M. *de Montberaut* is to give him up the command of this poſt by order of the governor, after having inſtructed him during three months, of its ſituation, environs, and many other articles. This latter gentleman* has a high reputation among the Indians of this country, who call him the *man of valour*, i. e. the *hero*. He was remarkable for the ſpirited ſpeeches which he delivered, in a manner analogous to the way of thinking of theſe nations. This officer had a quarrel with the Jeſuits, and therefore aſked to be recalled; and was ſucceeded by M. *Aubert*, the brother of Father *Aubert*, a Jeſuit miſſionary in *Louiſiana*. M. *Montberaut* is a declared enemy to theſe miſſionaries. Whilſt Father *Le Roi* was at *Allibamons*, he wrote to the governor to diſcredit this officer, to whom the ſoldier who was to carry the letter delivered it. The commander ſaw after this the Jeſuit, who ſhewed him many civilities, according to the political principles of theſe good fathers: The officer aſked him, whether he had written ſomething againſt him. The Jeſuit, not ſuſpecting his letter to be in the officer's hand, aſſured him by all that was ſacred he had not. Then M. *Montberaut*

* He is the brother of the Count *de Montaut*, who belonged to the houſehold of the Dauphin.

Montberaut called Father *Le Roi* an impoſtor and a cheat, produced the letter, and fixed it at the gate of the fort, giving it in charge to the ſentinel to take care of it; and ſince that time there were no Jeſuits among the *Allibamons*.

Whilſt I am here going to ſpeak of the *Allibamons*, I ſhall have an opportunity to treat likewiſe of the *Taſkikis*, the *Octaſhepas*, the *Tonicas*, the *Kawuytas*, the *Abekas*, the *Talapoaſhas*, the *Conſhakis*, and the *Pakanas*, whoſe manners are all nearly related to one another. All theſe nations put together can raiſe about four thouſand warriors. They are all well-ſhaped men, live commonly along the river ſides, and no ſooner are you arrived among theſe well-behaved men, whoſe women are of the ſame character, and for the greater part beautiful, but they come to receive you at the landing-place, ſhaking hands with you, and preſenting you with the calumet. After having ſmoaked, they aſk from you the cauſe of your coming, and the time you ſpent on the road; what ſtay you intend to make among them, whether you have a wife and children *.

They

* The politeneſs of the Indians goes even ſo far as to offer to the Europeans their girls, and for that purpoſe the chiefs

They likewiſe inquire the particulars of the war in *Canada*, and aſk how the King their father does. They then bring you a diſh made of maize or Indian corn, which they coarſely pound, and boil in water, generally together with ſome veniſon *. They likewiſe ſerve up bread made of the flour of the ſame corn, baked in hot aſhes, roaſted young turkies, broiled veniſon, pancakes baked with nut-oil, cheſnuts when in ſeaſon, boiled with bears greaſe or oil, roebucks tongues, together with hen and turtle † eggs.

The ſoil of *Louiſiana* reſembles, in the lower parts of the colony, that of *Egypt* after the Nile has overflown the country; it is excellent, and chiefly ſo in the country of the nations I now ſpeak of.

The melons are here prodigiouſly large, full of juice, and in great plenty: the water-melons are

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ſpeak the next morning in the following manner in the village: Young men and warriors, do not be fooliſh, love the maſter of life; hunt for the ſupport of the French, who bring us our wants: and you young girls, do not be hard-hearted, nor ungrateful with your body in reſpect to the white warriors, for to get their blood; by this alliance we ſhall get wit like them, and be reſpected by our enemies.

* This is called *Sagamité*. † Sea-tortoiſe.

are ſo delicious, that they are given to the ſick to quench their thirſt during the burning fits of the fever. Potatoes are plentiful here; and the Europeans are very fond of this kind of root, which taſtes like cheſnuts roaſted in hot aſhes.

The Indians are generally contented with one wife, of whom they are jealous to exceſs. When an Indian lies at a village where he has no wife, he hires a girl for a night or two, as he pleaſes, and her parents never have any objection to it; they concern themſelves very little about their girls, ſaying their bodies are free: the Indian girls do not abuſe this liberty; and they find it their intereſt to keep up an appearance of modeſty, in order to engage their lovers to aſk them in marriage: but in regard to wives the Indians maintain, that they have ſold their liberty by marrying, and that they muſt not be ſerved by other men than their huſbands. The men keep the privilege of having ſeveral wives, and they can leave them whenever they pleaſe; but this ſeldom happens. When a woman is caught in adultery, the leaſt puniſhment is being repudiated. The huſband then leaves the hut; and if they have any children, he takes the boys, and the wife the girls; ſhe muſt remain a widow for one year; but he can marry again immediately.

He can likewiſe take his wife again, therefore ſhe muſt not enter on a ſecond marriage till a whole year be paſt.

The marriage of the Indians is quite ſimple, as I have already obſerved; the mutual conſent of the parties is the only tie which joins them. The future huſband makes ſome preſents of furs and victuals in the hut of his bride's father; if they be received, a feſtival is made, to which the whole village is invited; after the meal, the exploits of the new huſband's anceſtors are ſung, and a dance enſues. The next day one of the oldeſt men in the village preſents the bride to the relations of her huſband; and thus the whole ceremony of marriage is concluded. All the Indians deduce their lineage from the women, alledging that they may be ſure of their origin on that ſide, and accordingly of their having their mother's blood in their veins; but that claiming their deſcent from the men was uncertain. The great warriors and the beſt huntſmen chuſe the prettieſt girls; the others have only their refuſe, and all the ugly ones left. The girls, knowing that they cannot be miſtreſſes of their hearts after they are married, know how to diſpoſe of them to the greateſt advantage: for when once they have a huſband, all coquetry muſt ceaſe; they

they muſt apply themſelves to their duties in their houſes, ſuch as preparing their huſbands meals, dreſſing the ſkins, making ſhoes, ſpinning the wool of the wild oxen, and making little baſkets in which they are very well ſkilled and induſtrious.

The manner of puniſhing the infidelity of their wives is as follows: the huſband muſt firſt be perfectly convinced of his wife's miſbehaviour by his own eyes, and then ſhe is watched by his relations and her own. The huſband is then no longer allowed to keep his wife, though he ſhould wiſh it; becauſe the Indians ſay, that it is unworthy and beneath a true man to live with a wife who has failed ſo eſſentially in her duty to him. In this caſe, the huſband goes to the *Cacique*, and tells him his ſtory. The chief immediately orders ſome people to go and cut little ſwitches, and all keep a profound ſecret. The chief then gives orders for a grand dance, which every man, woman, boy, and girl in the village is obliged to attend, unleſs they will expoſe themſeves to be fined; but there are hardly ever any abſent: in the midſt of the dance the guilty woman is extended on the floor, and beaten on the back and ſtomach without mercy, and her ſeducer undergoes the ſame ceremony.

When

When theſe wretches have been well flogged, a relation on each ſide comes and lays a ſtick a croſs the criminals and the executioners. That moment they ceaſe to beat; but then the huſband comes and cuts off all his wife's hair cloſe to her head *, and reproaches her in preſence of all the people, that is, he repreſents to her how much ſhe has done wrong to act as ſhe had done with him, that he had let her want for nothing, but that ſince ſhe had however tranſgreſſed, ſhe might now go with her ſeducer; whoſe hair they likewiſe cut on his forehead, and tell him, pointing to his paramour, There, that is thy wife. He is at liberty to marry her that inſtant, but he muſt go to ſettle in another village.

When a married woman debauches a married man, the women meet together among themſelves each with a ſtick of an arm's length, and go to the criminal woman, whom they beat without mercy, which creates great mirth and laughter amongſt the young people; the women would kill the guilty wretch, if the men did not ſnatch away the ſticks.

Phyſic,

* The Indian women have long hair in treſſes.

Phyſic, war, hunting and fiſhing are the only arts which the Indians are ambitious of knowing. They educate their children very hardy, and make them bathe and ſwim in winter time at day-break; which done the young men come of their own accord before their chief warrior, who holds a ſpeech to them, telling them never to fear the water; that they may be purſued by their enemies; and that if they are taken they are burnt alive; that they muſt on this occaſion prove that they are true men, by uttering no complaints *.

When the harangue is finiſhed, the chief ſcarifies their thighs, breaſt and back, in order to uſe them to pain, and he then gives them great blows with leather ſtraps †. The young men are then allowed to take place among the warriors; and when they have done ſome great action in the wars, they are marked with needles, in

* The Indians are obliged to ſupport bad luck with heroic conſtancy, in order that their valour may deſcend to their poſterity.

† Theſe leather ſtraps are of the breadth of three fingers. The Indians uſe them for carrying their bundles when they ſet out on a journey.

in the manner I have explained to you when I ſpoke of the *Illinois*.

Their children whilſt they ſuck their mother's milk, are daily bathed in cold water during winter; and when they grow up, the earth is their bed. As the Indians love their children very much, they accuſtom them very early to fatigue; and indeed as their whole body is naked, it is no more ſenſible to the cold than the face and hands.

The old men, that cannot follow them, whenever they make a retreat, deſire to be killed with clubs, both to ſpare them the wretchedneſs of a decrepit condition, and to avoid falling into the hands of their enemies, who would certainly burn or eat them; for the Indians in their wars kill men, women and infants at the breaſt, which together with the ravages of the ſmall pox, is a cauſe of the depopulation of America.

It will not be amiſs Sir, to obſerve that it is merely an act of humanity on certain occaſions when a ſon puts an end to his father's life. The Indians have a great veneration for their old men; they regulate their conduct by their advice, for they undertake nothing with-

without their consent. They likewise take great care of the old men, and I have seen their chiefs on their return from a hunting party, before they shared the game, lay aside the share of the old people, which is likewise appropriated to the use of widows and orphans, whose husbands and fathers have been killed in defence of their country. The Indians are very hospitable towards strangers with whom they are in peace, and kind to their allies and friends, but cruel and unmerciful to their enemies. They are surprised and even scandalized to see a number of Englishmen at *New Orleans*, drawn thither in time of war, for the sake of trading under the specious pretence of coming to exchange prisoners*. A cacique lately returned from *New Orleans* freely owned to me, that he had a great mind to break their heads for killing the *French* in the north, that is, during the siege of Quebec, and that he was tempted to take his revenge upon those that were at *New Orleans*. He added,

* Here our author inserts a long invective against the English who come in vessels to *New Orleans* with prisoners of war on board, which they offer to exchange, and that under this cloak, they get information of the strength and situation of the colony, and buy up all the furs they can get. Some allowance must be made for national prejudice and French pertness. F.

added, that in his country they ſpoke to their enemies with the club in their hands, as ſoon as *the hatchet is dug up*; a phraſe which denotes, that nobody ought to have any commerce or correſpondence with the enemy, directly or indirectly, under any pretence whatſoever, after war is declared, unleſs he will prove a traitor to his country, and be puniſhed accordingly.

When peace is concluded they bury the hatchet or the club under ground, ſignifying thereby that all their hatred towards their enemies is buried in oblivion, that the horrors of war are at an end, and that friendſhip and good underſtanding are growing again between them and their friends, like the white flowers of their tree of peace, (which is the white laurel), that ought to ſpread its branches over the *white* ground; which is a metaphorical expreſſion which means the ground of peace.

The cacique I mentioned before, is called *Tamathlemingo*, and he is very warm in the French intereſt. I know that he has ſcornfully rejected the preſents which ſome Engliſhmen would have loaded him with, and he had a great mind to break their heads for making him ſuch a propoſition. He wears a ſilver medal faſtened round

round his neck by a leather thong. He often told me, he would be buried together with the image of his father (that is, the king's portrait) which he wears on his breaſt; and having always been faithful to him he hoped to ſhake hands with him in the land of the ſouls, where he expected to ſee him one day. After this worthy chief had ſhewn me theſe fine ſentiments which parted from his heart, I gave him a bottle of brandy to drink the health of his father and mine. Such little *douceurs* when given on proper occaſions, have a great effect upon theſe people; thus they were greatly moved when I pulled off my ſhirt and gave it them in the name of their father, telling them that he pitied them, becauſe he knew by means of the *ſpeaking ſubſtance** that his children were naked.

Theſe nations have no idea of the political ſyſtems which are known among the European powers. In their opinion, the allies of a nation muſt aſſiſt them, when they are in war, and have no correſpondence with their enemies. I have had a long and ſerious conference with one *Allexi Mingo*, who is a juggler and likewiſe the chief of a diſtrict among them, and pretends to have been

* Paper, or letters.

been abuſed by ſome *Spaniſh* ſoldiers of the garriſon of *Penſacola*: this Indian owned that he had formed a deſign in order to be revenged of them, to make a general incurſion with his warriors into *Florida*, to the very gates of *Penſacola*. This Indian would pay me a compliment, and make me approve of his deſign, by telling me, that he was partly drawn into it, becauſe the Spaniards lay ſtill upon their mats; i. e. they were at peace with the Engliſh, whom they received into their ports, though at that time, they were our enemies.

I anſwered this diſcourſe of the Cacique in expreſs terms and ſuch as were moſt capable of making him deſiſt from his enterprize, as I was willing to prevent a maſſacre of the Spaniards who were our allies and neighbours: accordingly I ſpoke to him in a manner analogous to the genius and character of the nation.

Alexi Mingo, ſaid I, prepare thy heart, open thy ears to hear the force of my words, for it will bring back to thee thy wits, which thou haſt loſt to-day.

I tell thee, then that the grand chief ſovereign of the *Spaniards*, who lives on the other

ſide

ſide of the great ſalt-water lake, in the old world that ſwarms with inhabitants is the brother * of the father of the red men, i. e. of the king of *France*, and accordingly, I muſt ſay, I diſapprove very much of thy bold deſign. I fairly declare to thee, that if thou perſiſteſt in it, thou canſt do no better than to begin with breaking my head. The Cacique anſwered, "Thy blood is as dear to me "as my own; beſides, the *French* have never done "me any harm, and I am ready to give my "life for them; thou canſt aſſure our father of "that. Oh that I had the ſpeaking ſubſtance "which thou haſt, to let him know my words, "but no, I rather wiſh I had a hundred mouths "which he might hear †."

After this proteſtation of friendſhip he gave me his *Calumet*, and when I had ſmoked a little I returned it to him, as having made peace for the *Spaniards*, by whom he pretended to have been ill-uſed; and as a ratification I gave him a bottle

* The Indians call their allies brothers.

† Some time after the author's departure, the Indians of theſe parts maſſacred ſeveral Engliſhmen, that were come within two leagues of fort *Toulouſe*, where *M. de Grand-Maiſon* then commanded, who is now Major of the troops at *New Orleans*.

tle of the fiery water, that is of brandy, ſaying, this I give thee to clean thy mouth, that it may not utter any more bad words againſt the Spaniards our allies: and to ſtrengthen my diſcourſe I gave a great roll of tobacco, for his warriors to ſmoke out of the great *Calumet* of peace. After my harangue was at an end, the young people came one after another to ſqueeze me by the hand, as a mark of friendſhip, which is cuſtomary among them.

I wiſhed, however, to perſuade this Cacique, who was piqued at the *Spaniards*, who receive Engliſh veſſels at *Penſacola*, becauſe they are at peace: for he ſaid they came to inform themſelves of the ſituation and ſtrength of theſe coaſts.

By way of appeaſing the Indian, I told him, that the governor daily waited for the arrival of a great piragua *, which ſhould bring him ſome of the ſpeaking ſubſtance, wherein the great chief of the Spaniards ſhould order him to dig up the hatchet of war, and to lift up his club againſt the Engliſh.

This

* An European ſhip.

This diſcourſe ſatisfied my Cacique; and as he had drank a good portion of brandy, he was very talkative, and I took the opportunity of queſtioning him concerning the grudge he bore the *Spaniards* in *Florida*. He told me, that he had heard by tradition, that the firſt *warriors of fire* * who came into this country had committed hoſtilities in it, and violated the law of nations; and, that ever ſince that period, the anceſtors of his nation had always recommended it to their poſterity to revenge the blood which had been unjuſtly ſhed. I told the juggling Cacique, that the Lord of life had revenged them ſufficiently, by the death of *Ferdinand Soto*, and almoſt all his warriors.

I added, that they had no further reaſon to hate the *Spaniards*; that *Philip* II. grand chief of the *Spaniards*, had diſavowed all the miſchief which his generals had done in theſe climates, as being contrary to his intentions.

* Hiſtory inform us, that in 1544, *Ferdinand Soto* made incurſions into this country; the Indians there, who had never ſeen any Europeans, called the Spaniards warriors of fire, becauſe they were armed with guns and piſtols: they ſaid, that the cannon was thunder, and that it cauſed the earth to tremble, by killing people at a great diſtance.

I told this American prince part of the ſtory of *Don Francis de Toledo*, viceroy of *Peru*, who publicly hanged the preſumptive heir to the crown, and ordered all the princes of the royal family of the *Yncas* to be killed, not even excepting the Spaniards, who from their mother's ſide were deſcended from *Atahualipa*. Don *Francis*, after ſuch an execution, expected to be raiſed to the greateſt dignities of the ſtate on his return to Spain; but he was very ill received by the grand chief of the nation, who ordered him with a harſh voice to get out of his preſence, ſaying, I have not appointed thee to be the executioner of princes, but to ſerve me and aſſiſt the unhappy. Theſe words ſtruck the viceroy dumb, and cauſed him ſuch an illneſs that he died a few days after. The ſame king cauſed the death of one of his miniſters that had impoſed upon him, merely by ſaying the word *Hoolabè*, which in the Indian language, ſignifies, *What, doſt thou lye?* The Cacique very gravely replied, "But if the grand chief "of the men of fire, appeared, as thou "ſayeſt, ſo angry at the viceroy, on account "of the cruelties which he had com-"mitted againſt his will, why did he not put

"him

" him in the frame * ? or why did he not cut off " his head, and ſend it back to *Peru* ? This " example of ſeverity and juſtice would in part " have ſatisfied the people whom this general " had ill-treated, by hanging on a gibbet, like " a thief, the heir of a great empire, who de- " pended only from the *Lord of life*, or the Su- " preme Being. Thus we red men, whom the " Europeans call ſavages and barbarians would " act towards the wicked and the murderers, " who ought to be treated like the fierceſt beaſts " of the foreſt."

I again replied to this Indian chief in the following terms, " Thou muſt know that the " grand chiefs of the white men that live in the " old country, are deſpotic and abſolute, and " that when they drive from their preſence their " generals or warriors, who have abuſed their ſub- " jects without cauſe, this affront is much more " ſenſibly felt by thoſe proud chiefs, who are " hated by the *Great Spirit*, or by God, on ac- " count of their miſdeeds, than the puniſhment

* A puniſhment which the Indians adjudge to thoſe that have committed cruelties, and are taken at war: they are put into a kind of frame, compoſed of two poſts, and a pole laid acroſs them, and burnt alive.

"of the frame, or a hundred blows with the "club upon the head, would be by a red "man."

At laſt I ſucceeded in ſoftening the hatred which theſe people had conceived againſt the *Spaniards*, and I imagine every hoſtile intention is ſuppreſſed now; for my explication was very ſatisfactory to my juggler.

I believe I have already obſerved to you, that the Indians are very ſenſible of injuries, and that they generally remember thoſe that have outraged them when they are in liquor. I have often been the mediator in order to terminate the quarrels between two Indians; I told them that they ought to live together as good brothers, forget the paſt, and employ their courage in the common defence of their country only. I further aſſured them that if they did not give ear to my words, the *Great Spirit* would be diſpleaſed with them, and make their crops of maize fail. The Indian women ran quickly to me, whenever any two were ready to fight, that I might judge between them, and I always did all I could to reconcile the parties; which pleaſed the women very much, who have nothing wild about them, but the name which people give

give them, and whoſe features are very regular. In a word, in this new world, as well as in the old, that lovely ſex is born to populate and not to deſtroy.

What I have ſtill to ſay of this nation is ſo ample, that I am obliged to divide it; I ſhall, therefore reſerve their mourning and their funeral cuſtoms for another letter.

I am, SIR, &c. &c.

Among the Allibamons the
28th of April 1759.

LETTER XVI.

To the same.

Mourning and Manner of burying the Dead among the Allibamons; *Juſtice done to the Chevalier* d'Erneville, *for a Soldier killed by a young Indian: their Religion; their Means of catching the Roebuck and the wild Turkies.*

SIR,

THE day before yeſterday I received one of your letters, which informs me that you are in good health, and that you continue to give me marks of your remembrance of me. In my preceding letter, I ſpoke to you of the marriage of the Indians; I ſhall now proceed to deſcribe their mourning. When a grand chief of the nation dies, this mourning conſiſts in not waſhing nor combing themſelves; the men daub their whole body with ſoot, mixed

up

up with bear's oil; and in a word, they renounce all ſorts of diverſions. When a woman loſes her huſband, ſhe is obliged to be in mourning for a whole year, and to lay aſide all her ornaments.

All the *Allibamons* drink the *Caſſine* *; this is the leaf of a little tree, which is very ſhady; the leaf is about the ſize of a farthing, but dentated on its margins. They toaſt theſe leaves as we do coffee, and drink the infuſion of them, with great ceremony. When this direutic potion is prepared, the young people go to preſent it in calebaſhes formed into cups, to the chiefs and warriors, that is the honourables, and afterwards to the other warriors, according to their rank and degree. The ſame order is obſerved when they preſent the Calumet to ſmoke out of: whilſt you drink they howl as loud as they can, and diminiſh the ſound gradually; when you have ceaſed drinking, they take their breath, and when you drink again, they ſet up their howls again. Theſe ſorts of orgies ſometimes laſt from ſix in the morning to two o'clock in

* This is the *Prinos glaber* of Linnæus. Sp. pl. p. 471. and *Caſſena vera Floridanorum*. Cateſby's Carol. 2. t. 57.

in the afternoon. The Indians find no inconveniencies from this potion, to which they attribute many virtues, and return it without any effort.

The women never drink of this beverage, which is only made for the warriors. In such assemblies, where they are never admitted, the Indians tell their news and deliberate on political affairs, concerning peace or war. However the Chevalier *d'Erneville*, says that he saw a woman, who was the grand chief's wife, go in, because she was a female warrior, and had a quick, penetrating mind. Her opinion sometimes prevailed in the conclusion of treaties.

The *Allibamons* love the French very much; there is an agreement on both sides, that if a *Frenchman* kills one of the *Indians*, he must die, and the same if an *Indian* kills a *Frenchman*; the last accident happened whilst the Chevalier *d'Erneville* commanded the fort at the *Allibamons*; a young Indian shot a soldier of the garrison, and disappeared immediately. As the officer did not know where the criminal was, he applied to the chiefs of the nation, saying, they must do him justice. They answered, that the young man had taken refuge with another nation; the *Chevalier*

valier d'Ernville did not put up with this excuſe; he told them that the dead man called for vengeance, and that blood ought to be avenged by blood, as is their expreſſion; that the murderer had a mother, and that ſhe ought to ſuffer in his ſtead. They anſwered, that ſhe had not killed the man; but the officer replied, that he ſpoke like the red man, who when ſomebody killed a perſon of their nation, and they had not juſtice done them for it, were revenged upon ſome perſon of the nation of the murderer. He laſtly repreſented it to them, that in order to keep the good underſtanding between the white and the red men, they ought not to oppoſe the puniſhment of the criminal. They offered him a great quantity of furs, and even horſes loaded with booty. This officer who is known for his zeal in preferring the king's intereſt to his own, and the honour of the nation to his fortune, refuſed all theſe preſents. He added, that he had not been able to ſleep ſince the death of his warrior, who called every night to him, *avenge my blood.* The poor Indians, ſeeing they could not move him, held a council and ſent out eight men, conducted by a young chief of the warriors. He went immediately with his men to the murderer's mother, and told her that ſince her ſon was not to be found, ſhe muſt die in his ſtead.

ſtead. The poor woman ſuffered herſelf to be led away, and was all in tears; her relations followed her with very ſad countenances; one of them ſeeing there was no pardon to be hoped for, ſaid to the chief of the troop, "*My mo-*
"*ther-in-law dies through courage, as ſhe has not*
"*ſtruck the blow.*" He propoſed they ſhould wait whilſt he went to fetch the murderer; he actually brought him into the aſſembly, where the Chevalier *d'Erneville* was, and ſaid, See, there is the guilty man, do what you pleaſe with him. The officer anſwered, that they ought to do him juſtice; and they immediately killed him †.

Juſtice

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* Thus the Indians execute juſtice; there is no need of drawing up caſes; all theſe forms are unknown; the law is, that he who has killed muſt be killed again, unleſs it be by accident, as in a drunkenneſs, in a fit of madneſs, or in their exerciſes.

† The relation of this ſtory, is by no means favourable to the French. They acted upon a barbarous and cruel principle, by bringing the mother of the guilty man to a puniſhment which ſhe did not deſerve; and had not her ſon on this occaſion preferred filial duty to ſelf-preſervation, the French Chevalier would have committed an inhuman action, by inflicting death on an innocent perſon. The *In-*

dians

Juſtice being thus done, the chief harangued the young people, and recommended it very ſtrongly to them, to keep their hands from the *French*,

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dians act upon principle, by avenging the death of their countrymen upon any other perſon of the nation to which the murderer belongs; for, on account of their confined ideas, and ignorance, they think the ſame conſtitution and manners take place among the Europeans, as are uſual among themſelves; and as they look upon their whole nation as a body of brethren, and a ſingle family, they are, therefore, of opinion that all the Europeans muſt be anſwerable for the death of one of their brethren. But as the Europeans boaſt to be civilized, inſtructed and Chriſtians, they ought to act according to the principles of their religion, the knowledge and inſtruction they enjoy, and their own conſtitution; all theſe oblige them to ſhew the Indians, by their example, the ſuperiority of their religion, knowledge and conſtitution; make them ſenſible, that if they acted like Indians they would commit an open injuſtice; and to enforce the return of ſuch actions in ſimilar caſes. The Europeans inſtead of inſtilling principles of humanity into the minds of the poor Indians, very frequently ſcandalize them by their uncharitable and barbarous manners; and thus the high refinements of our manners, our boaſted civilization, our pride, founded upon the ſuperiority of our knowledge, and that real great advantage of being inſtructed in a religion founded upon reaſon and charity, inſtead of bringing our immortal minds to that pitch of excellence they are capable of, according to the true intention of theſe advantages, prove only our deep corruption, and the wilful depravity of our hearts, and I may ſay, the barbarity of our manners. F.

French; and added, that as often as they ſhould loſe their ſenſes and kill our people, they would do us the ſame juſtice again.

The Chevalier *d'Erneville* held a ſpeech to the aſſembly in his turn, and made the nation a preſent which the governor had ſent him. The Indians gave him the great calumet of peace to ſmoke, all the ſoldiers and *French* inhabitants likewiſe ſmoked it, in ſign of a general amneſty; afterwards they drank the *Caſſine*, which is the potion of the *white word*, i. e. the potion of oblivion and peace.

Since that time this nation has never offended us. The *Allibamons* offered, in 1714, to build upon their ground, and at their expence, a fort, which was afterwards called Fort *Touloufe*, and they introduced the *French* into it. M. *de Bienville*, who was then governor, went to take poſſeſſion of it in the King's name *.

They

* This governor is in ſuch great eſteem with them, that they always mention him in their harangues. His name is ſo deeply graved in the hearts of theſe good Indians, that his memory will always be dear to them. As ſoon as they ſaw me they inquired after him; I anſwered, that he was at the great village, or *Paris*, in good health, with which they were highly pleaſed.

They never would permit the *Engliſh* to do the like; they pay no regard to the menaces of the King of *England*; every Cacique or chief of a village thinks himſelf a ſovereign, who only depends upon the *Maſter of life*, or the *Great Spirit*.

The *Allibamons* have called their country the *white country*, or land of peace; and repoſe on their mats, that is, *they attack no body*; which is a kind of allegory by which they ſeem to tell all the nations on earth, that the murdering hatchet is buried, and that they may come to trade with them in ſafety.

The following is an harangue which I heard one of the chiefs of this nation hold: "Young "men and warriors, do not diſregard the *Ma-* "*ſter of life*; the ſky is blue, the ſun is with- "out ſpots, the weather is fair, the ground is "white, every thing is quiet on the face of the "earth, and the blood of men ought not to be "ſpilt on it. We muſt beg the ſpirit of peace "to preſerve it pure and ſpotleſs among the na- "tions that ſurround us. We ought only to "ſpend our time in making war with tygers, "bears, wolves, ſtags, and roe-bucks, in order "to have their ſkins, with which we may trade

"with

" with the Europeans, who will bring us what " we want, in order to maintain our women and " children."

The Americans in general have no knowledge of letters. The art of writing is unknown to them. They are ſurpriſed to ſee that one can converſe with another at a great diſtance by a paper; and they look upon the miſſive letters with admiration. When they are truſted with letters, they bring them very exactly to the perſons they are directed to; and though it ſhould rain ever ſo hard, and they had a great many rivers to paſs, thoſe letters are never wetted. The *Allibamons* trade with the *French*, *Engliſh*, and *Spaniards*, but they do not love the latter much; they make war upon them ſooner than upon any other nation, on account of their cruelties towards the *Mexicans*; their memory is admirable, they always remember the wrong which is done to them.

Thoſe whom I ſpeak of here acknowledge a Supreme Being, whom they call *Soulbieche*. I aſked them what they thought of the other world; and they anſwered, that if they have not taken another man's wife, or if they have not robbed nor killed any one during their life, they

they ſhall go after their death into a very fertile country, where they ſhall want neither wives nor proper places for hunting, and that every thing will be eaſy to them there; but that on the contrary, if they have behaved themſelves fooliſhly, and diſregarded the great Spirit, they will come into a barren land full of thorns and briars, where there will be no hunting, and no wives. This is all I have been able to learn concerning the belief of theſe people of another life.

The *Allibamons* bury their dead in a ſitting poſture; in order to juſtify this cuſtom they ſay, that man is upright, and has his head turned towards heaven, which is to be his habitation. They give to them a calumet, and ſome tobacco to ſmoke, that they may make peace with the inhabitants of the other world. If the corpſe be of a warrior, he is buried with his arms, which are a muſket, ſome powder and bullets, a quiver full of arrows, a bow, and an hatchet or club; and beſides theſe a mirror *, and ſome vermilion with which they may dreſs themſelves in the other world.

* The young Indians are never without a little hatchet or a mirror hung on their wriſt.

When a man kills himſelf, either in deſpair or in a ſickneſs, he is deprived of burial, and thrown into the river, becauſe he is looked upon as a coward.

I have already ſaid, that the Indians muſt ſupport misfortunes with heroic conſtancy. Their enthuſiaſm prompts them to make ſongs of death when they are taken priſoners, and deſtined to be burnt; on ſuch an occaſion an Indian ſays: "I fear neither death nor fire, make me ſuffer "ever ſo much, becauſe my nation will revenge "my death." This occaſions his enemies either to accelerate his fate, or ſometimes adopt him, ſaying he is a man of courage.

When there is a diſturber of public peace amongſt them, the old men ſpeak to him thus: "Thou art at liberty to go away; but remem- "ber, that if thou art killed, the nation ſhall "diſown thee; we ſhall not weep for thee, nor "avenge thy death." So irregular a life is puniſhed with the greateſt contempt among theſe people, as among all others *.

The

* The young Indians ſometimes ramble into the neighbouring villages, and carry off the women; theſe kinds of rapes

The Indians generally ſet out a hunting towards the end of October. The *Allibamons* go ſixty, eighty, and ſometimes an hundred leagues from their villages, and they take their whole families with them into their piraguas: they do not return till March, which is the time of ſowing their corn-grounds. They bring back many furs, and a great quantity of dried fleſh. When they are returned into their villages, they regale their friends, and make preſents to the old men, who have not been able to go with them, and have kept in the huts during the time of the great hunt.

Theſe nations have ſingular methods of catching the roe-deer; an Indian takes the head of a roe-buck, and dries it; he then carries it with him into the woods, where he covers his back with the ſkin of this animal, he puts his hand into the neck of the dried head, taking care to put little hoops under the ſkin to keep it firm on the hand; he then kneels down, and in that attitude,

rapes occaſion the wars among the different tribes; for they fight not for land, having more of that than they can cultivate. It is a capital crime among the Indians to carry off another man's wife; if it is the Cacique's wife, the whole nation is obliged to avenge the affront offered to their chief.

titude, mimicking the voice of these creatures, he shews the head; the roe-deer are deceived by it, and come very near the hunters, who are sure to kill them.

There are Indians who, by means of this stratagem, have destroyed four hundred roe-deer in one winter's hunting. They employ very nigh the same trick to get the wild turkies in the woods; some of them put the skins of these birds on their shoulders, and on the heads a bit of scarlet or other red cloth, which is agitated by the wind, and whilst the birds look at them, their comrades kill them with arrows; they do not use fire-arms, for fear of frightening them, and whilst there are any turkies on a tree, they continue to shoot them with great dexterity; these birds are commonly foolish enough to expect the return of their fellows who fell down; the Indians have often treated me with these birds, and I found them excellent during autumn.

The Indians are likewise very dextrous fishermen; they neither employ hooks nor nets; they take reeds, which are very common along the sides of rivers, dry them near the fire, or in the sun-shine, sharpen one end like a dart, and fasten

en a cord made of the bark of a tree, to the other end; when they are upon the lakes in their canoes, they throw this dart or harpoon into the water at the fiſh, and draw it up again by means of the cord; others ſhoot the fiſh with a bow and arrows, and when they have wounded a fiſh, it comes to the ſurface of the water.

Before I have done with the *Allibamons*, I ſhould not forget to tell you, that in July, when their harveſt begins, they have a great feaſt. That ſolemn day they paſs without eating; they light a new fire for phyſic, as they call it, or juggling, after which they take a purge, and offer to their *Manitou* the firſtlings of their fruit: they finiſh the day in religious dances.

This nation has likewiſe jugglers or quacks; I ſhall relate to you a very droll adventure which happened to me with one of them. As I was going up the river of *Allibamons*, a quack and juggler came to ſee me with ſeveral Indians, men and women. He aſked for ſome brandy, I gave him a bottle full of it, which he drank with his companions. He aſked me for ſome more, but I told him I had no more; he would not believe me, and ſeeing that he could not get any thing, he thought he would intimidate

me, by telling me he was a magician, and would *practiſe phyſic* * againſt me, if I gave him no brandy; *i. e.* he would enchant my boat, ſo that it could not proceed. I told him I feared him not; that I was a phyſician myſelf. This word aſtoniſhed my adverſary.

This pretended magician told me to ſhew him the effects of my art; I anſwered, that he ought to begin, but he replied that I ſhould do it being a ſtranger; at laſt, after many debates, I began to make ridiculous geſtures, and looked into a book which the juggler underſtood nothing of; I bid him retire, and leave me alone, it being the cuſtom of the jugglers, by which means they conceal their impoſtures from the other Indians. I had the ſkin of a tyger-cat, the fleſh and bones of which had been extracted through an inciſion in the neck; I gave this ſkin to the Indian quack, telling him to reſtore its ſight, and make the creature go about. He anſwered, that he could not do it; I ſee, ſaid I, thou art a mere novice in this art, I ſhall perform it.

I muſt

* This is an expreſſion which the Indians make uſe of, denoting the application of their ſlight-of-hand tricks, and grimaces intended for to make their countrymen believe that they are magicians or conjurors.

I muſt previouſly inform you, that, in my laſt voyage, I brought with me from France enamelled eyes, which perfectly imitated the natural eyes; a thing which the Indians here had never ſeen; I faſtened them with the reſin of firs, in the place of thoſe which were wanting in the ſkin, into which I afterwards put and confined a living ſquirrel, with its head towards the neck of the tyger-cat; a ſoldier whom I had inſtructed was quite ready with a club; every thing being thus prepared, I opened the door of the cabin, and the Indians advanced, with the juggler or quack doctor at their head. I held the cat in my arms, and the ſquirrel jumped about in it, which immediately ſurpriſed my pretended magician; he cried out that I was a true *phyſician* or ſorcerer, becauſe I had brought to life, reſtored to ſight, and made dead cats walk. When the other Indians had well conſidered it in my arms, I let it go on the ground, pricking the ſquirrel with a pin, which made it run with the cat's ſkin towards the ſpectators, who thought it would devour them; they went backwards, and the women, through a natural fear, ran from my boat, declaring that I was a ſorcerer. I then ran to my tyger-cat, ſeeming to be very angry with it, I quickly took out the ſquirrel and the glaſs-eyes, then preſſing the teeth in the

cat's head againſt my ſtomach, I cried out as if the creature had bit me, flinging it on the ground immediately; the ſoldier whom I had armed with a club, ſtrikes at the revived tyger-cat, in order to kill it for having revolted againſt its maſter, and for having been willing to attack red men, who were our friends and allies.

After this comic ſcene, I gave the ſkin to the Indian juggler, and deſired him to make it revive as I had done. He owned, that my art was above the reach of his. I then bid him enchant my boat to prevent its going on; but he anſwered, that one phyſician againſt another could do nothing; that I was his maſter in the art, and he an ignorant fellow *. All the ſavages

* The Indians repoſe a great confidence in their doctors; the juggler's hut is covered with furs, with which he covers and dreſſes himſelf. He goes in quite naked, and begins with pronouncing ſome words which no body underſtands; they are, as he ſays, to invoke the Spirit; after that he riſes, cries, agitates himſelf, appears quite frantic, and gets into a profound ſweat †.

† The hut ſhakes, and the ſpectators believe it is done through the preſence of the Spirit; the language which he ſpeaks on this occaſion, has nothing in common with the ordinary Indian language; it is nothing but the ravings of a hot

yages who were out upon the winter hunt along the river, brought me proviſions of roe-deer and turkies, that I might begin again to play off my trick; but for fear of being diſcovered, and to preſerve my reputation, I ſaid I could not

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hot imagination, which theſe quacks have impoſed upon their countrymen as a divine language; thus the moſt cunning people have always deceived the reſt.

† The heathen nations in the Ruſſian empire have exactly ſuch jugglers or conjurors as are here deſcribed. In the government of *Cazan* are the *Tcheremiſſes*, the *Tchuwaſhes*, and the *Wotiaks*, three nations; the firſt of which call their conjurors *Muſhan*, the ſecond *Yommas* or *Yymmas*, and the third *Tona* or *Tuno*; they are of both ſexes, and make the ſame grimaces as theſe American jugglers. In *Siberia* the *Tunguſi*, the *Yakuti*, and the *Byrati*, call their conjurors *Shamans*, and they perform the ſame tricks, and make many antic geſtures at their pretended conjurations. Their dreſs is on theſe occaſions likewiſe very remarkable, ſometimes ornamented with the fangs and talons of beaſts and birds of prey, ſometimes hung with ſuch a terrible quantity of ſeveral pieces of iron, as will both make the robe very heavy, and cauſe a great rattling noiſe at the leaſt motion of the conjuror's body. The more we go eaſt in *Siberia*, the more common is this kind of conjurors, and the more ſtriking is the likeneſs between the ſavage inhabitants of *North America*, and the ſavage Nomadic nations of the north-eaſt parts of *Aſia*. Some more hints of this ſimilarity are pointed out in a note to *Kalm's Travels into North America*, vol. III. p. 126. F.

not do it over again, leſt ſome one of them ſhould be devoured by the revived creature, and the better to convince them, I ſhewed them the marks of the animal's teeth on my ſtomach. They then approved very much of what I had ſaid, and thanked me for intereſting myſelf ſo much for them, as to expoſe myſelf generouſly to prevent the furious revived tyger-cat from killing their women and children; they added, that I had done well to reduce it to its lifeleſs ſtate, in order to make it an example to others, becauſe it was an evil ſpirit; theſe poor people regard the French as ſupernatural men.

It is ſometimes dangerous to be a doctor; for if ſome one dies among the Indians, they attribute his death to the phyſic, and not to the incurable diſpoſition of the patient; therefore I would never adviſe any body to abuſe the credulity of theſe people. I likewiſe told them, that ſince I had been bitten I had abjurated the office of a magician, and that I knew no other phyſician than the *Maſter of life*, whoſe aid they ought to implore; that he was as much the father of the red men as of the white men, who are their elder brothers.

The

The pretended reſurrection of my tyger-cat, however, gave me great reputation among the quacks or jugglers of this country, and even among thoſe of Spaniſh *Florida*, whoſe natural curioſity led them to pay me a viſit; they joined the *Allibamons* doctors, and begged me to perform the ſame piece of legerdemain which I had done on my voyage: I told them, I was ſorry that I could not ſatisfy their curioſity, becauſe I had ſtruck the poſt *; however, that I might not ſend them away diſcontented, I told them, that their preſence was very agreeable to me, that the *Grand Chief* of the French and the father of the Indians was contented with their nation, and with them in particular; that the doctors having more knowledge than the others, both in the art of curing the ſick, and in their zeal towards inſpiring their countrymen with fidelity and friendſhip for the French, it was on that conſideration I come on purpoſe to bring them a preſent, which was the word of their father, and that M. *Aubert* had orders from the governor to divide it among them.

I further told them, that as I was glad to get acquainted with them, and to converſe with them,

* The Indian manner of ſwearing is to ſtrike againſt a poſt with a club,

them, I wiſhed they would tell me their proper names. As theſe people are neither baptiſed nor circumciſed, they commonly take t hen ame of ſome animal, ſuch as bear, wolf, fox, &c. The gravity which I affected, in order to command the reſpect of theſe Indian doctors, made them aſk me, whether I wrote their names in order to give an account of them to their father, by means of the ſpeaking paper? to which I anſwered, that it was for that very purpoſe.

When I had written down their names, I ſometimes made uſe of them in order to paſs for a fortune-teller.

I ſhut myſelf up in the hut of one of the doctors, and a ſoldier, to whom I had told the number of letters which compoſed each name, put his hand on the ſhoulder of the juggler, and with a little rod ſtruck him as many times as there were letters in his name; I being within eaſily gueſſed what man my ſoldier laid his hands upon; and ſo on with all the reſt. They could not comprehend how I could gueſs ſo well without ſeeing them, and they owned that it went beyond their imagination.

The

The Sieur *Godeau*, chief ſurgeon and keeper of the magazine at the fort of *Allibamons*, had already before me practiſed phyſic in the preſence of the Indians, who were looking at a little phial full of mercury; after looking at it with attention, they told him they wiſhed to have it. He ſaid he would give it them, but that he wanted the phial; he poured out the quickſilver immediately on the ground, and bid them take it up; they could never do it, for it rolled away on all ſides; the aſtoniſhed ſavages called it a ſpirit which divided itſelf into ſeveral parts, which being collected together formed only one body; but their aſtoniſhment was much greater when the Sieur *Godeau* took up all the mercury with a card, and put in the phial again, in their preſence, which none of them had been able to do. This ſurgeon did more, he poured *aqua-fortis* upon it, which diſſolved it, and made it diſappear entirely; ſince that time the Indians have revered him as a great doctor.

M. *de Montberaut* has put the command of the fort of the *Allibamons* into the hands of M. *Aubert*, who is adjutant of the fort *Mobile*. I take the liberty to write to the governor, in order to repreſent it to him with all reſpect, that being the ſenior officer of that gentleman, I could not

ſtand

ſtand here under his orders; that he might not be further obliged to do any ſervices foreign to his function *, the King's order concerning that particular being very explicit; that as our inſtitution is founded upon honour, I ſhould think I would derogate from that which I had acquired in the King's ſervice, if I did not make the obſervations of a ſoldier, whoſe zeal for the ſervice he knows; that it was very natural for me to think, that by this conſideration he would think himſelf obliged to let me enjoy the emoluments annexed to my place, otherwiſe I ſhould beg him to recall me to *New Orleans*, that I might ſeize the firſt opportunity of ſetting out for Europe, where I ſhould have the pleaſure of aſſuring you that I am, SIR, &c.

At the Allibamons, the 2d of May 1759.

P. S. I

* I muſt, however, do M. *Aubert* juſtice; he has had the command of the fort at the *Allibamons* to my prejudice, but I muſt praiſe the regard he has had for me, in offering to divide the authority, and to live upon the footing of a friend with me.

P. S. I have forgot to mention to you a viſit which the emperor of the *Kawytas* has paid us ſome time after M. *de Montberaut*'s departure. As we had advice of it by a courier, I went to meet his Indian majeſty in order to receive him at ſome diſtance from the fort. I had poſted ſome ſoldiers, who fired their muſkets by way of ſignal to the gunners to fire the cannon at the moment, when the prince ſhould put his hand in mine *: he was mounted on a Spaniſh horſe, with an Engliſh ſaddle, and with a houſing of a tyger's ſkin †.

This emperor marched gravely at the head of his attendants; I could hardly keep from laughing, on ſeeing tall well made naked men, painted with all kinds of colours, follow each other in a file, according to their rank, like ſo many Capuchin friars.

The Indian prince appeared enraptured with the honours that were ſhewn him; he had never

* The Indians are without compliments and ceremonies, they laugh at our bows, or method of ſaluting with the body bent, and the foot advanced forwards or retreated backwards.

† American leopard.

never ſeen cannons, and called them great muſkets.

He wore on his head a creſt of black plumes; his coat was ſcarlet, with *Engliſh* cuffs on it, and beſet with tinſel lace; he had neither waiſt-coat nor breeches, but only an apron made of a bit of ſcarlet cloth, which was taken up between the thighs and faſtened to his girdle. Under his coat he had a white linen ſhirt; his feet were covered with a kind of buſkins, of tanned roe-deer ſkins, which were died yellow. As he was a young man, of eighteen or nineteen years old, his nation had appointed a noble and wiſe old man as a regent; he held a ſpeech in his ſovereign's name, and he preſented the calumet of peace to M. *Aubert*, who told him after the firſt compliments were over, that he ſhould go to reſt, it being the cuſtom among the Indians, not to ſpeak of political affairs till the next day, in order to have time to make reflections.

The Sieur *Laubéne*, the king's interpreter, tranſlated the diſcourſe of the regent, who likewiſe acted as the emperor's chancellor,; he did not fail to call to mind the great ſervices which his late father had done to the French, and that the

the ſon had always been willing to come to ſee them, in order to renew the friendſhip, which had never ceaſed to exiſt between his nation and ours, and to ſmoke the ſame calumet with them.

It is true, his predeceſſor always was inviolably attached to M. *de Bienville*, and the latter granted that Cacique the title of emperor on that account.

The governor likewiſe deſired to bring all the tribes of *Allibamons* to acknowledge the emperor as their grand chief; but they refuſed it ſaying, that it was quite ſufficient that every village was ſubjected to a chief: in a word, they would change nothing in their form of government.

The emperor, his regent, his chief of war or general, his doctor or juggler, and his hired ſervant appeared at ten o'clock in the morning before our commander, where we all were dreſſed in our uniforms in order to compoſe a kind of court for him. As to the emperor, his imperial habit was no better this day than that of his attendants, for they all were

dreſſed as Adam was in the terreſtrial paradiſe *.

This young prince had a noble ſhape, and a handſome appearance; he was ſprightly and graceful; during his ſtay here he has been treated at the king's expence. As he was of my ſize, the governor of the fort begged me to give him a blue coat, and a gold laced waiſtcoat, a hat with plumes, and a ſhirt with laced ruffles.

M. *Aubert* likewiſe made ſome trifling preſents to this American prince, and to the officers of his court, at the king's expence, and ſent them home very well ſatisfied.

Their country is ſituated between *Carolina* and *Eaſt Florida*, eaſtward of *Mobile*; theſe people have never been conquered by the *Spaniards*, who are become their declared enemies. The emperor always dined at M. *Aubert*'s table, with his regent. The others had not the ſame honour done

* The coat which the emperor had on when he arrived at the Allibamons, had been given him by a captain in the king of Great-Britain's army. He laid it by on this public day, through political views, and in order to get one from the French.

done them, in order to inſpire them with a greater regard for the *French* officers. I muſt tell you, that the ſon of that noble *Kawytas* whom the French had honoured with the pompous title of emperor, was very much at a loſs the firſt time he dined with us; for he had never made uſe of a fork before; therefore he looked at us very attentively, in order to imitate our way of eating. His regent had not the ſame patience, he took the breaſt and back bone of a turkey and broke it with his fingers, ſaying, that the *Maſter of life* had made them before the knives and forks were made.

Towards the end of the repaſt we had a little farce with the hired ſervant of the Emperor, who ſtood behind his Indian majeſty during dinner; this fellow obſerving that we eat muſtard with our boiled meat, aſked M. *de Boudin* what it was that we ſeemed to reliſh ſo much; as this officer ſpeaks the language of the nation, having lived forty years among them, he anſwered, that the French were by no means covetous of what they poſſeſſed; the Indian immediately took a ſpoonful of muſtard, which being very ſtrong, forced him to make many ridiculous contortions, which made his maſter burſt out laughing; his ſervant was far from

laughing; for he thought he was poiſoned; M. *Aubert* ordered a bottle of brandy to be brought and bid him take a good draught, aſſuring him that he would be cured immediately.

The *Kawytas* are very reſerved towards ſtrangers in matters of religion; they never ſpeak in public till they have reflected ſufficiently on what they are going to ſay.

Theſe people annually hold a general aſſembly in the principal village of their nation; there is a great hut for that purpoſe, in which every one takes place according to his rank, and has a right to ſpeak in his turn *, according to his age, abilities, wiſdom, and the ſervices he has done his country.

The grand chief of the tribe opens the ſeſſion by a ſpeech, which concerns the hiſtory or tradition of their country; he tells the military exploits of his anceſtors, who have diſtinguiſhed themſelves in defence of their country, exhorting his ſubjects to imitate their virtues, in ſupporting the wants and miſeries of human life with

* The Indians diſapprove of the European habit of ſpeaking all together in an aſſembly.

with patience, and above all, without complaining againſt the *Great Spirit, who is the Lord of the life of every being here on earth*; and in enduring adverſity with courage, and laſtly in ſacrificing every thing to the love of their country and of liberty; it being a thouſand times more glorious to die as a man, than to live as a vile ſlave.

The chief having ceaſed ſpeaking, the oldeſt among the nobles riſes, ſalutes his ſovereign, and harangues with his body naked to his girdle; he is all over in a ſweat, on account of the heat which his action and declamation throws him into; his geſtures are natural, and his metaphors explain his mind: he perſuades his audience into a belief of all that he ſays, by his eloquence, and the excellence of his diſcourſe. Nothing is more edifying than theſe aſſemblies; you hear no prattling, no indecency, no ill-timed applauſe and no immoderate laughter there. The young men are very reſerved and attentive to hear the words of the old men, being perſuaded that it is for their good.

LETTER XVII.

To the ſame.

The Author leaves the Allibamons. *His Navigation in the River of* Tombekbé. *How he eſcapes the voraciouſneſs of an Alligator. He meets with a Party of revolted* Chactaws, *and brings them to their Duty again. He returns to* Mobile.

SIR,

INSTEAD of an anſwer to the letter which I had wrote to the governor, I received an order at the *Allibamons* to go to Mobile, and ſerve there under the orders of M. *de Velle*, the king's lieutenant in that place; thus in ſtead of going to *France* as I had told you, I have got orders to command a convoy of proviſions and ammunition to the fort

Tom-

Tombekbé, which is ſituated on a river of the ſame name, this ſtation is about ten legues from the nation of *Chactaws*, I have followed my inſtructions with the greateſt exactneſs, and to the entire ſatisfaction of my ſuperiors; the letters and certificate which I can ſhew up, are proofs of it.

I left *Mobile* on the 20th of Auguſt 1759, with three boats, in which were ſoldiers and *Mobile* Indians: the latter offer themſelves to help the French in rowing, for ſome trifle or other which is given them.

You embark in the river *Mobile*, and after going up about fifteen leagues, you come to a place called la *Fourche* (i. e. the fork) that is the juncture of two rivers which fall into the *Mobile*, viz. the river of *Allibamons* and the river *Tombekbé*; I entered into the laſt on the 27th of Auguſt, in order to go up to the fort; we were in the fine ſeaſon, and I had choſen a very proper place for a camp on the banks of a river; the Indians having had good ſucceſs in fiſhing thereabouts, made me a preſent of a *barbel*, a fiſh of about four feet long, which they commonly dry. The weather being fair, I did not chuſe to pitch my tent, but only ſat down by myſelf

upon a kind of plat-form covered with green ſods, which overlooked the river, thinking that place the moſt convenient for reſting: I ſpread the bear's ſkin taken in my pretended government, and wrapped myſelf up in my tent, covering my face with it, becauſe the vapours at night are dangerous in this ſeaſon; this little nicety was near coſting very dear to me as you ſhall ſee.

I had put my fiſh at my feet, leſt it ſhould be ſtolen; but it happened worſe. I had already ſlept for a whole hour very quietly, for the inhabitants of theſe parts are our allies and friends, when all of a ſudden, I found myſelf carried away by an extraordinary force, I awoke immediately, believing ſome one was playing me a trick; I aſſure you I never was more frightened, and I believe that a thing of leſs conſequence will often have the ſame effect; I thought the devil was carrying me off. I called for help, and the people believed that I was dreaming, or a viſionary; but how great was my ſurpriſe when I awoke. I ſaw an alligator (crocodile) of above twenty feet long *; he was come

* His ſize frightened me, and I was likewiſe infected with the bad ſmell of muſk which that animal carries with it.

come out of the river in the calm of night, and voracious as theſe creatures are, being attracted by the barbel which lay at my feet, he greedily fell upon it, and carrying it to the river he took me along by the corner of the tent in which I had wrapt myſelf up. I had time enough left to get out of it, at the border of the precipice, and ſo eſcaped with the fright. I only ſaved the bear's ſkin, which I never leave now. This ſtory, plain as it is, may paſs for a prodigy among thoſe who love the marvellous.

The *Collapiſſas* and *Wanchas*, two little Indian nations, which live above *New Orleans*, fight with the crocodiles, or alligators, in the water in the following manner.

One takes a piece of hard wood, or of iron, and ſharpens it at both ends; he takes hold of it in the middle, and ſwims with that one arm extended. The alligator advances with his mouth open, in order to devour the arm of the Indian, who thruſts in his hand in which he holds the piece of wood, and the alligator pierces both his jaws through with it, can neither open nor ſhut his mouth again, and is brought on ſhore, by the Indian; they often take this diverſion;

and

and the negroes of *Guinea* or of *Senegal* do the ſame.

After going up about ſixty leagues between foreſts and mountains which confine the river, we met with ſuch low water, that we were obliged to unload all the goods, and hide them in the woods; I only left the proviſions and ammunition in the boat, and gave them all my attention. I never was in a more diſagreeable ſituation; we were obliged to draw the boats for upwards of fifteen leagues; I put myſelf at the head of the ſoldiers and Indians, and drew at the cord, in order to ſet them an example. You may judge of my uneaſineſs, if you will conſider that during this piece of work, it would have been eaſy to defeat and to plunder us. I met a party of revolted *Chactaws*, going to the Engliſh; I exhorted them to return; they croſſed the river in a place, called in their language *Taſkalouſſas*, which ſignifies the white mountain *; their chief, whoſe name is *Mingo Howmas*, had the inſolence to pretend he could oblige me to give him brandy; he even was audacious enough to lift his hatchet over my head.

On

* It is a kind of marle or chalk which would be of great value in Europe.

On this occaſion, I told him I was a *true man*, that I feared not death, that I had given up my body *, and was willing to die, being perſuaded that if he killed me and my warriors, who were but few, the grand chief of the French, beyond the great lake, would revenge my blood on their nation, by ſending as many warriors there, as there are leaves on the trees.

Theſe men were ſurpriſed at my reſolution; they ſaid, "That I was a *man of valour*; that I "made them recover their wits which they had "loſt in forming the deteſtable deſign of leaving "their father's hand, but that they hoped I "would forget what was paſt, becauſe I was "very good." At the end of this harangue, they preſented the calumet of peace to me, which I accepted on condition that I ſhould ſmoke with a new fire out of it, to ſignify an eternal oblivion of what had paſt, and a renovation of the alliance with the *Chactaws*, children of the grand chief of the French. To convince them that I would forget the paſt, I told them that the fire would be produced of itſelf.

In

* That is, devoted myſelf to die for my country.

In my laſt voyage from France I took with me a little phial of phoſphorus; I put ſome of this powder into the calumet of peace, and looked up to the ſky in pronouncing ſome words addreſſed to the Great Spirit; in the mean time the phoſphorus being expoſed to the air, ſet fire to the tobacco, which ſurpriſed, not only the Indians, but even the Frenchmen who were with me, becauſe they had never ſeen the experiment tried with this powder.

After this myſterious ceremony, I made theſe people preſents of ſome European trifles, and gave their chief a bottle of brandy, for it is cuſtomary among the Indians, that when you treat with them, you muſt give ſomething to confirm your words. Then they all ſhook hands with me, and went back to their village. They told me, they were aſhamed of their fooliſh conduct, and we ſeparated, ſatisfied with each other.

Some time after this adventure, the rains were ſo frequent, that they ſwelled the water in the river very much,

As I had diſpatched an Indian to M. *de Chabert*, governor of Fort *Tombekbé*, he ſent me a detachment

detachment commanded by M. *de Cabaret*, a very ſkilful officer, who was of great ſervice to me on this occaſion, by bringing me refreſhments for my ſoldiers, who had hardly any proviſions left.

Our European coxcombs, who carry mirrors, toilets, night-gowns, &c. with them, would be looked upon as women by the Indians, and not as chiefs of the warriors: they would not diſtinguiſh themſelves in thoſe campaigns, where they muſt endure the exceſſive heats of the ſummer, and the rigours of winter, lie on the bare ground, and expoſe themſelves to all the changes of weather, in order not to be ſurpriſed by the Indians. Mr. *Braddock*, general of *New England* in 1755, made the fatal experiment, when he came to take *Fort du Quêne*; he was maſſacred with his whole army at ſome diſtance from that place, by a ſmall number of French, and ſome faithful Indians, led by brave *Canadian* and European officers, who did wonders of bravery in this action.

At laſt I happily arrived at Fort *Tombekbé* on the 25th of September, after going a hundred leagues by water, without ſeeing a ſingle habitation. Every night we are obliged to camp in the woods

woods upon the banks of the river; but the greateſt inconvenience are the *Muſkitoes* or *Maringoins*, a kind of gnats which are inſupportable in *Louiſiana*. In order to be free from them, we put great reeds into the ground, and bent them over like arches; we then covered them with a linen cloth, and laid down a bear's ſkin as a matraſs. All the voyages made by people of the colony are done in the ſame manner by water.

After going on ſhore to camp, the commanding officer ſhould always take care to appoint a guard, and to place ſentinels in the woods to prevent ſurpriſes. The officer ought always to be very careful in chuſing an advantageous ſituation for his camp, ſuch as an iſle or a cape.

If the Sieur *D**** had taken theſe precautions, when he was ſent to the *Illinois* by M. *de Bienville*, in 1735, with a boat laden with gunpowder, in order to carry on the war with the *Chickſaws*, he would not have been ſurpriſed, as he was, by a party of warriors of that nation. It may be aſſerted, that the neglect of that officer has been no leſs fatal to us, than the meanneſs, ignorance, and avidity of the governor of the fort of the *Natches*; this boat laden with

powder,

powder, being taken by the *Chickſaws*, ſerved them to carry on the war againſt us for above thirty years, and cauſed the death of many brave men, and the loſs of many millions of money to the king.

The following is, in a few words, the manner in which M. *D* * * * was ſurpriſed and taken priſoner. One day when it blew a north wind, he was obliged to bring his boat to the ſhore, and ſo encamped thereon, in order to wait for better winds. He went out hunting, and his ſoldiers did the ſame in imitation of their chief; but the *Chickſaws*, who had followed and watched them for a long while, took the boat with the gun-powder, and made all the ſoldiers in it priſoners. When M. *D* * * * returned from hunting, he was inveſted and taken as his ſoldiers had been; but the Indians, contented with their capture, and having loſt none of their people, granted them their lives; M. *D* * * * had the good luck to eſcape, and returned to *New Orleans*.

When one is on a journey, he ſhould always have an Indian ſcout to go before him, both for the ſake of reconnoitring the enemy or preventing ſurpriſes, and likwiſe for finding out game.

It

It happened to me as I was going up the river of *Tombekbé*, that I was in want of proviſions, but Providence ſupplied it viſibly. The Indians, who are like ferrets in the woods, came to give me advice that they had made a good diſcovery; they found the neſt of a great eagle, called the *royal eagle* *; as the tree on which this neſt

* The eagle here called the *royal*, is called in Engliſh the *Golden Eagle*, *Penn. Br. Zool.* p. 61. tab. A. and in 8vo vol. i. p. 121. Falco chryſaëtos, *Linn.* and Le grand aigle royal, *Planches enluminées*, tab. 410. Mr. Pennant relates, from *Smith*'s hiſtory of Kerry, "That a poor man in that county "got a comfortable ſubſiſtence for his family, during a ſum-"mer of famine, out of an eagle's neſt, by robbing the ea-"glets of the food the old ones brought." This in ſome meaſure confirms our author's account. M. *Buffon*, in his *Hiſt. naturelle des oiſeaux*, 12mo. edit. vol. i. p. 117. attacks M. *Salerne*, for having related the account he got from a friend, *who found three ſtrong eaglets of this kind in a neſt, fixed between two rocks.* M. *de Buffon*, though a great natural hiſtorian, is frequently ſubject to have his peculiar opinions, which he defends againſt all facts proving the contrary: and, by his eloquence, he explains away the ſtrongeſt arguments; and invalidates even facts, in ſo much, that their ſtrength in proving againſt him dwindles quite away. Our author had no peculiar opinion to favour; he muſt have known the bird, which is not uncommon in France, and may be ſeen in the menageries of the King and the nobility, and in various cabinets; and therefore I think our author's account

neſt was placed, was a very tall one, they came for hatchets to cut it down; they were indeed well paid for their trouble, for they found a great quantity of game of all kinds in the neſt; ſuch as fawns, rabbets, wild turkies, grous, partridges, and wood-pigeons, there were four eaglets in it, already pretty ſtrong; theſe the Indians took for themſelves, to the great ſorrow of their parents, who would have picked out their eyes, if the Indians had not been armed with muſkets; the poor birds were quite furious, and the eagle is very juſtly called the king of the birds on account of his intrepidity; but the balls did not ſpare their feathered majeſties, who

account a ſtrong proof againſt M. *Buffon*'s opinion, that the golden eagle has no more than two eaglets, ſeldom three, never four. This will be a warning to all naturaliſts, not too much to rely upon the aſſertions of that French natural hiſtorian, who, with all his abilities, indulges too much his opinions, in ſpite of facts that are againſt him. I know and acknowledge the merit of this able zoologiſt, but as his fine language, the fine prints, the vanity of the French nation, and the preſent faſhionable taſte, have procured him a high reputation, it is no more than natural that his authority ſhould be deciſive with many, who like rather *light ſummer-reading*, than the heavineſs of a critical diſcuſſion in natural hiſtory. I therefore thought, that ſuch a hint might be ſerviceable to thoſe whom M. *de Buffon* would carry a-ſtray by his florid ſtyle. F.

fell the victims of parental love. The Indians told me, that the great Spirit ſent us theſe proviſions; indeed it was to be looked upon as a *manna* ſent by Providence, which favoured us in theſe deſarts.

I have received news here from *New Orleans*, from whence my friends write, that every thing is in great confuſion there, on account of an Engliſh ſhip which is arrived from *Jamaica* as a ſmuggling veſſel, commonly called there an *interloper*.

This ſhip is called the *Texel*, commanded by Captain *Dias-Arias*, a Jew, born an Engliſh ſubject. The *Ordonnateur* having found, that it ought to be confiſcated according to the orders of the marine, has ſeized it for the King's account; M. *de Belleiſle*, who is fort *major*, and the governor's *locum tenens*, has been requeſted to aſſiſt with the military for that purpoſe; but M. *de Kerlerec* returning from *Mobile*, has ſuſpended M. *de Belleiſle* in the performance of his functions; that governor afterwards has had M. *de Rochemore*'s ſecretary taken up at three o'clock in the morning, by a detachment of ſoldiers, who, after breaking the doors and windows, dragged him out of bed, and put him on board

a veſ-

a veſſel, the deſtination of which remains unknown: upon this M. *de Rochemore* has ſent to the miniſter, Monſieur *de Fontenelle*, counſellor in the ſuperior council.

When I ſhall be better informed of all that has happened there, I ſhall impart it to you; I write to the governor to grant me my recall to *New Orleans*.

I am, SIR, &c.

At Tombekbé, the 19th of September 1759.

LETTER XVIII.

To the Same,

Deſcription of the Country of the Chactaws. *Their Wars; their Way of treating their Sick; their Superſtition; their Commerce; their Plays of Exerciſe. Country of the* Tchicachas *or* Chickſaws, *our Enemies.*

SIR,

I Thought of ſetting out from hence in two days, but the deſire of knowing the moſt warlike and moſt numerous nation of *Louiſiana* made me change my mind; I employ my leiſure hours to deſcribe what I have ſeen and heard of them. The *Chactaws* are entirely the friends of the *French*; they have given proofs of it under the government of M. *Perrier*, when they were made uſe of to puniſh the *Nat-*

ches

ches who maſſacred the *French* that were ſettled among them. The court likewiſe annually makes them preſents to keep them in our intereſt. This nation can bring four thouſand warriors into the field, who would march with pleaſure. It would be very eaſy, if it was managed as carefully as it ought to be, to make them ſing their ſongs of war, and ſtir them up to revenge us againſt the *Engliſh*, who are committing hoſtilities in our poſſeſſions in *Canada*; theſe people might on occaſion ſerve us to great advantage, if they made incurſions into the Britiſh colonies, eſpecially the provinces of *Georgia* and *Carolina*, which are quite empty, all their troops and the national militia having been ſent to the ſiege of *Quebec*. Many brave officers of this colony, who ſpeak the language of the Indians, ſuch as M. *de Rouville*, *du Tiſſenet*, and others, are eager to head ſome parties of this nation, who could deſtroy the crops of our enemies, would pillage and burn their habitations, and give the alarm even to the walls of *Charles-town*, which might make a diverſion in favour of *Canada*.

The *Chactaws* love war, and are acquainted with ſtratagems. They never fight in order, or ſtand their ground, they only harraſs and teaze their enemies much, without being cowards;

for when they come to close engagement, they fight very coolly. Some of their women are so fond of their husbands as to go into the wars with them. They stand by their sides in the battle, with a quiver full of arrows, and encourage them continually by telling them, they ought not to fear their enemies, but die as *true men*.

The *Chactaws* are very superstitious; when they go to war they consult their *Manitou*, who is carried by the chief. They always expose him to that side where they are to go towards the enemy, and place some warriors as sentinels round him. They have such a veneration for him, that they do not eat till the chief has given him first his share.

During the continuance of the war, they obey their chief very exactly; but as soon as they return, they only consider him according to the liberality with which he disposes of his property.

It is a custom among them, that when the chief of a party of warriors has got booty from the enemy, he must distribute it to the warriors, and to the relations of those who have been kill-

ed

ed in battle, in order, as they ſay, *to dry up their tears*. The chief keeps nothing for himſelf, except the honour of being the ſupport of the nation.

Intereſt, which is the cauſe of ſo many crimes in the old world, is unknown in the new world; it is not without reaſon that the *Cuba* Indians ſaid, Gold is the true God of the Spaniards, and we muſt give it them in order to have peace. In *America* we do not ſee any of thoſe men, whom we call *ſavages*, kill their brothers in cool blood, or make uſe of falſe witneſſes to undo them, in order to get their eſtates. Thoſe intrigues are unknown there, which are made uſe of to acquire riches, by means unworthy of a human being. No wife poiſons her huſband there, as is done in Europe, in order to marry again. There are no women laſcivious or audacious enough publicly to declare the impotence of their huſbands, as the European women do; nor does any Cacique's wife get her huſband ſtrangled, as that Neapolitan princeſs did with her's, becauſe he would not ſatisfy her brutal paſſion; no girls there deſtroy their own offſpring, in order to appear chaſte in the eyes of men. The Indian women abhor the Chriſtian girls who fall into that caſe; they oppoſe the

fierceſt wild beaſts to them, becauſe they take great care of their young.

If the chief of a party of *Chactaws* does not ſucceed in the war which he has undertaken, he loſes all his credit; nobody has any truſt in his command, and he is obliged to come down to the rank of a mere warrior. However, admire the variety of opinions among the different nations. It is no ſhame, if, among theſe warlike people, a man turns his back upon the enemy. This deſertion is attributed to a bad dream; if the chief of a great party, having dreamt that he will loſe ſome men, tells his warriors that he has had a bad dream, they return immediately to their village; as ſoon as they arrive there, they have recourſe to phyſic, *i. e.* to juggler's tricks, which they employ on all occaſions; then they march towards the enemy; and if they meet him, they kill five or ſix of his men, and come home as content as if they had ſubdued a great empire.

A general who ſhould gain a victory with the loſs of many of his men, would be ill received by them; becauſe they do not value a victory when it is bought with the blood of their friends and relations: their chiefs are always careful to

preſerve

preſerve their warriors, and never attack the enemy unleſs they are ſure of an eaſy victory, either on account of their numbers, or their advantageous ſituation; but as their adverſaries are likewiſe cunning, and evade all the ſnares that are laid for them, it depends then upon ſuperior fineſſe; therefore they hide themſelves in the woods in day-time, and only walk at night; if they are not diſcovered, they attack by break of day. As they are generally in a woody country, he that goes firſt ſometimes carries a very thick buſh before him, and as they all follow each other in a file, the laſt hides the marks of their feet, by putting the leaves on the ground on which they went in order again, ſo as to leave no veſtiges that might betray them.

The chief things by which they diſcover their enemies are the ſmoke of their fires, which they can ſmell to a very great diſtance, and their tracks or footſteps, which they can diſtinguiſh in an incredible manner. One day an Indian ſhewed me, in a place where I had ſeen nothing, the footſteps of ſome *Frenchmen*, *Indians*, and *Negroes*, and the time when they had gone that way; I own that this knowledge is amazing: it may well be ſaid, that when the *Indians* apply to any ſingle thing, they excel in it.

Their

Their art of war consists, as you see, in vigilance, attention to prevent surprise, and to attack the enemy unprepared, in patience and strength to support hunger, thirst, the rigours of the weather, and the labours and fatigues inseparable from war.

He that has done a fine action carries the scalp of his dead enemy as a trophy, and gets the mark of it made on his body, then he mourns for him, and during that time, which lasts a month, he must not comb himself; and when his head itches, he is only allowed to scratch it with a little rod, which he ties to his wrist for that purpose.

The *Chactaws* and their wives are very uncleanly, living chiefly in places at a distance from rivers. They have no kind of religious service, they live without troubling their heads with futurity, and however believe that they have an immortal soul. They have a great veneration for their dead, whom they do not bury. When a *Chactaw* dies, his corpse is exposed upon a bier, made on purpose, of cypress bark, and placed on four posts fifteen feet high. When the worms have consumed all the flesh, the whole family assembles; some one dismembers the skeleton,

leton, and plucks off all the muſcles, nerves and tendons that ſtill remain; they bury them and depoſit the bones in a cheſt, after colouring the head with vermillion. The relations weep during this ceremony, which is followed by a feaſt, with which thoſe friends are treated who come to pay their compliments of condolence; after that, the remains of their late relation are brought to the common burying ground, and put in the place where his anceſtor's bones were depoſited. During the performance of theſe ſad ceremonies, a deep ſilence is obſerved, they neither ſing nor dance, and every one goes home weeping.

In the firſt days of November they celebrate a great feaſt, which they call the feaſt of the dead, or of the ſouls; all the families then go to the burying-ground, and with tears in their eyes viſit the cheſts which contain the relics of relations, and when they return, they give a great treat, which finiſhes the feaſt.

It may be ſaid in praiſe of theſe *Americans*, that the friendſhip ſubſiſting among the relations, a thing uncommon in *Europe*, is worthy of imitation. I have mentioned ſome inſtances of it which exceed thoſe of antiquity. The mutual

love

love of the *Indians* towards each other, inclines them to aſſiſt each other when they are infirm. This ſincere love particularly ſhews itſelf in the laſt duties which they pay to their friends and relations by their tears and grief, even then, when they exiſt no more.

The *Indians* in general have a great veneration for their doctors or jugglers, who are real quacks, that impoſe upon the people, and live handſomely at their expence. They have a great authority among the *Indians*, and the latter go to them upon every occaſion for their advice; they conſult them as oracles. When a *Chactaw* is ſick, he gives all he has in order to be cured by them; but if the patient dies, his relations attribute his death to the phyſic, and not to his indiſpoſition; and can conſequently kill the doctor if they have a mind to do it *; however, this caſe ſcarce ever happens, as they generally have an excuſe at hand. Theſe doctors are, however, acquainted with ſeveral excellent plants for curing the diſeaſes common in their country;

* There are, likewiſe, people in *France*, who lay the death of their relations to the charge of the phyſician, and reſemble the Indians very much in their thoughts on this ſubject.

country; they know a certain remedy for the bite of rattle ſnakes, and other poiſonous animals.

When the *Indians* are wounded with a bullet or an arrow, the doctors or jugglers begin with ſucking the wound of the patient, and ſpitting out the blood: they never employ lint, or tents, in their chirugical operations; but they have the powder of a root, which they blow into the wound, to accelerate its ſuppuration, and they make uſe of another which dries and heals it; they preſerve wounds from mortification, by bathing them with a decoction of ſome roots, which they know *.

When they are tired and exceſſively fatigued, after returning from a war, or from a hunt, they uſe ſweating in ſtoves †, as a reſtorative.

In

* M. *de Boſſu* would have very much obliged all the world, by making uſe of his influence over the Indians, which he repeatedly mentions, in order to get from them the knowledge of ſuch plants as they employ in their ſeveral diſeaſes and aliments: this would have been really uſeful, and a proof of his humanity and curious inquiries. F.

† Theſe ſtoves are round huts, built like ovens in the middle.

In theſe baths they boil all ſorts of medicinal and odoriferous herbs, whoſe eſſences and ſalts riſing with the ſteam of the water, enter into the body of the afflicted perſon, and reſtores his loſt forces. This remedy is equally good for abating and deſtroying all kinds of pains; of courſe you ſee no Indian affected with the gout, the gravel, and other diſtempers which we are ſubject to in Europe; but this may likewiſe be attributed to their frequent bodily exerciſes. You ſee no great Dutch bellies there, nor any great tumours under the chin, ſuch as the Piedmonteſe wens.

The Chactaws put a firm belief in enchanters and magicians, and when they meet with one ſuch pretended ſorcerer, they cut off his head * without any ceremony.

I ſaw an Indian of the nation of *Chactaws*, who had lately been baptized: as he had no luck

middle of the villages; they are kept in order by an *Alexi*, or public doctor.

* In 1752, when I was at *Mobile*, I ſaw an Indian whom the others killed with a hatchet, becauſe he pretended to be a ſorcerer. The other Indians attributed to him all the misfortunes that happen to their nation.

luck in hunting like his companions, he imagined he was bewitched; he went immediately to Father *Lefévre* the Jeſuit * who had converted him, and told him that his *medicine* or trick was good for nothing, becauſe ſince he had practiſed it upon him, he could kill no ſtags or roe-deer; he therefore deſired he would take off his enchantment again. The Jeſuit, in order to avoid the reſentment of this Indian, did as if he annihilated the baptiſmal ceremony. Some time after, this Indian killed a roe-deer, either by accident, or by his own ſkill, and thus thought himſelf freed from the enchantment, and was content.

The mind of this nation in general, is very rough and unpoliſhed. Though one tells them ever ſo much of the myſteries of our religion, they always anſwer, that what we ſay is above their underſtanding. They have, beſides, very bad morals, moſt of them being addicted to ſodomy. Thoſe defiled men, wear long hair, and a little petticoat like the women, who deſpiſe them very much.

The

* The Indians call the Jeſuits the men with the black robe; they ſay that they are not like other men, and call them women, in deriſion.

The *Chactaws* are very active and merry; they have a play at ball, at which they are very expert; they invite the inhabitants of the neighbouring villages to it, exciting them by many ſmart ſayings. The men and women aſſemble in their beſt ornaments, they paſs the whole day in ſinging and dancing; they even dance all the night to the ſound of the drum and *chichikois*.

The inhabitants of each village are diſtinguiſhed by a ſeparate fire, which they light in the middle of a great meadow. The next day is that appointed for the match; they agree upon a mark or aim about ſixty yards off, and diſtinguiſhed by two great poles, between which, the ball is to paſs. They generally count ſixteen till the game is up. They are forty on each ſide, and every one has a battledoor in his hand, about two feet and a half long, made very nearly in the form of ours, of walnut or cheſnut wood, and covered with roe-ſkins.

An old man ſtands in the middle of the place appropriated to the play, and throws up into the air a ball of roe-ſkins, rolled about each other. The players then run, and endeavour to ſtrike the ball with their battledoors; it is a pleaſure to

ſee

ſee them run naked, painted with various colours, having a tyger's tail faſtened behind, and feathers on their heads and arms, which move as they run, and have a very odd effect: they puſh and throw each other down; he that has been expert enough to get the ball, ſends it to his party; thoſe of the oppoſite party run at him who has ſeized the ball, and ſend it back to their ſide; and thus they diſpute it to each other reciprocally, with ſuch an ardour, that they ſometimes diſlocate their ſhoulders by it. The players are never diſpleaſed; ſome old men, who aſſiſt at the play, become mediators, and determine, that the play is only intended as a recreation, and not as an opportunity of quarrelling. The wagers are conſiderable; the women bet among themſelves.

When the players have given over, the women aſſemble among themſelves to revenge their huſbands who have loſt the game. The battledoor they make uſe of, differs from that of the men, in being bent; they all are very active, and run againſt each other with extreme ſwiftneſs, puſhing each other like the men, they having the ſame dreſs, except on thoſe parts which modeſty teaches them to cover. They only put

rouge on their cheeks, and vermillion, inſtead of powder, in their hair.

After playing well on both ſides all the day long, every one retires with his glory or ſhame, but without rancour, promiſing to play again another time as well as they can: thus the Indians both men and women, exerciſe themſelves in running; they are likewiſe very ſwift, for I have ſeen ſome run as faſt as ſtags.

The children exerciſe themſelves in ſhooting with a bow and arrows for prizes; he that ſhoots beſt, gets the prize of praiſe from an old man, who calls him an apprentice warrior; thus they are formed by emulation, without corporal puniſhment; they are very expert in ſhooting with an inſtrument made of reeds about ſeven feet long, into which they put a little arrow, feathered with the wool of a thiſtle, and in aiming at an object, they blow into the tube, and often hit the aim, and frequently kill little birds with it.

Almoſt all the aſſemblies of the *Chactaws* are held in night-time. Though they are barbarous and ferocious, it is neceſſary, in order to gain their confidence, to take great care to keep your promiſes

promiſes to them, without which, they treat you with the greateſt contempt, proudly telling you that you are a liar, an epithet which the *Indians* have given to the preſent governor, whom they call *Oälabé Mingo*, i. e. the lying chief.

When the women are with child, their huſbands abſtain from ſalt, and from pork, for fear thoſe aliments might do harm to their children. The women never lie-in in their huts; they go into the woods to be delivered, without receiving any aſſiſtance.

As ſoon as they are delivered, they waſh their infants. The mothers apply a maſs of earth to the foreheads of their children, to make them have flat heads, and as they get more ſtrength they increaſe the bulk, it being a beauty among theſe people to have a flat head. They never ſwaddle their children.

They never wean their children till they are diſguſted with their mother's milk. I have ſeen ſome children grown up ſo as to be able to tell the mother, *ſet down, that I may ſuckle*, and the mother immediately ſat down. Their cradle is made of reeds, they put their children into it ſo

that their head lies three or four inches lower than the reſt of the body, therefore you never ſee any contracted or hump-backed people amongſt them. The women leave the huts in their catamenia, which the Indians call marks of valour. During that time, they are obliged to prepare their own meat and drink, and they do not return among men, till they are thoroughly purified. The Indians believe, that if they come near a woman in that ſtate, they would fall ſick, and that if they went to war after it, they would have bad luck.

Though the *Indians* only value themſelves upon their origin from the ſide of the women, yet the latter are not allowed to correct the boys; they have only an authority over their daughters. If a mother ſhould ſtrike her ſon, ſhe would be reprimanded and ſtruck again; but if the boy diſobeys her, ſhe muſt bring him to an old man, who inflicts a puniſhment on him, and then throws ſome freſh water over his body.

If a woman commits an infidelity, ſhe muſt *paſs through the meadow*, i. e. all the young men, and ſometimes even the old ones, ſatisfy their brutality on her, by turns. Such is the puniſh-

ment

ment of adultery among the *Chactaws*. Sometimes the guilty woman, has the good luck, after this infamy, to find a mean fellow, who takes her as his wife, under the pretence that she muſt be diſguſted with a criminal conduct, that has drawn ſuch a puniſhment on her, and that ſhe will conſequently behave better for the future. Be this as it will, ſhe is always looked upon as a depraved and immoral woman.

Before I finiſh my letter I muſt ſay a word of the *Tchicachas*, or *Chickſaws*. This nation is not ſo numerous as the *Chactaws*, but more terrible, on account of their intrepidity. All the northern and ſouthern *Indian nations*, and even the *French*, have attacked them, without ever being able to drive them out of their country, which is the fineſt and moſt fruitful on the continent. The *Chickſaws* are tall, well made, and of an unparalleled courage. In 1752 and 1753, they attacked Meſſ. *Benoiſt* and *de Reggio*, who commanded the convoys from the *Illinois* ſtation, deſcending the river *Miſſiſippi*: theſe *Indians* always chooſe ſome advantageous ſituation, to make an attack in, their moſt common poſt is at the rocks of *Prudhomme*, the river be-

ing narrow there, they can annoy the boats, which have no decks.

It is believed that the *Chickſaws* killed Meſſ. *Bouſſelet* and *de la Morliere*; theſe two officers, though they were very brave, fell into an ambuſcade for want of experience, not knowing the topography of the country they were in any more than general *Braddock*. An officer ought, therefore, always to apply to that, in order to avoid ſurpriſes, or elſe he ſhould always be on the defenſive and prepared.

The *Engliſh* have always been in alliance with theſe valiant warriors; they have always traded with them, and ſupplied all their wants.

The *Indians* of this nation ride well on horſeback: they leave the care of cultivating and ſowing their grounds to their women, who are handſome and cleanly. When a *Chickſaw* has killed a roe-deer, he tells his wife whereabouts it lies; ſhe goes to fetch it, dreſſes it, and ſerves it up to her huſband: the women never eat with the men, who ſeem very indifferent about them, but really love them better than any other nation.

The

The *Tchicachas*, or *Chickſaws*, only puniſh adultery with whipping the two offenders who have been caught in the fact, making them run naked through the village; after which the huſband repudiates his wife.

As theſe *Indians* gave ſhelter to the *Natches*, after the maſſacre of the *French*, the latter armed in 1736 againſt, and attacked them, with the united forces of the whole colony, but without ſucceſs.

M. *d'Artaguette* major and governor for the king, in the country of the *Illinois*, came to join M. *de Bienville* the governor of *Louiſiana*; he brought him the troops of the *Illinois*, and from the frontiers of *Canada*, but the army which that officer commanded, was ſurpriſed and defeated, becauſe he had been abandoned by the *Indians*, who were our allies. M. *d'Artaguette* was taken, with ſeven officers, and about twenty-ſix ſoldiers and inhabitants, by the *Chickſaws*, who burnt them alive; among them was the Father *Senat* a Jeſuit, who went with M. *d'Artaguette* in the quality of chaplain. The detail of this tragic ſcene has been related by a ſerjeant, called *Louis Gamot*, who was a ſpectator of the ſad fate which his companions underwent; he

reſerved to be burnt laſt, but he eſcaped by an odd ſtratagem. As he was acquainted with the language of the *Indians*, he employed it on this occaſion to utter invectives againſt them; and getting looſe, he threw all he found near him at their heads, ſaying, you are dogs, becauſe you have burnt my chiefs; I will be burnt too, I fear neither fire nor death, for I am a true man, make me ſuffer much, becauſe I deſire it. The *Chickſaws*, ſeeing his reſolution, looked upon him as an extraordinary fellow, and granted him his life; he was afterwards ranſomed by an *Engliſhman* from *Carolina*, and is now at *Charlestown* the capital of that colony.

In another expedition againſt the *Tchicachas*, which was undertaken on the 26th of May in the ſame year, and commanded by M. *de Bienville*, we had not any more ſucceſs; many brave officers loſt their lives in it, and the major-general of the army, and the adjutant received ſuch dangerous wounds, that the laſt died of them. I have heard from the Chevalier *de Lucer*, who is of a Swiſs offspring, that his father, who ſerved as captain in our troops, had been in this unlucky expedition; this officer has likewiſe told me the ſtory of the Chevalier *de Grondel*, who now belongs to the garriſon of *Mobile*, and commands

commands the Swiſs troop of the regiment of *Halwill*, belonging to the ſervice of the marines; he had then the command of a detachment of grenadiers of the regiment of *Karrer*, in M. *de Bienville*'s army againſt the *Chickſaws*.

In order to abridge the account of this affair, I ſhall only ſay, that this officer, joining fidelity and bravery natural to his nation, to the impetuoſity of youth, received five ſhot in his body during the attack. As he remained on the field of battle after the retreat, he was juſt going to become the object of the enemy's vengeance and fury, if ſeveral ſoldiers of his troop had not generouſly expoſed their lives to ſave his, notwithſtanding the balls and arrows which were ſent at them from the fort of the *Chickſaws*, killed five of them one after another.

However, one, without fearing the danger, returned to the field, and happily arrived in his troop carrying his officer on his ſhoulders. The chief ſurgeon of the army tried all he knew to cure him, and the general, who values military merit, did not fail to give in an account of the officer's behaviour at court; and M. *de Maurepas*, in conſideration of the wounds M. *de Grondel* had received, granted him an extraordinary

grati-

gratification, till he could get the croſs of *St. Louis.*

The ſoldier * who ſaved him at the peril of his life, was immediately made ſerjeant at the head of his troop. You ſee, Sir, by this ſhort account, how worthy of admiration that well-eſtabliſhed ſubordination is, among the troops of the *Helvetic* body, that are ſo inviolably attached to the ſervice of our King, and how much thoſe that keep it in force feel the happy effects of it.

The action of theſe ſoldiers, which was really an heroic one, well deſerves that their names ſhould be tranſmitted to poſterity.

In 1754, the Baron *de Porneuf* imparted to me his intention of going upon a diſcovery into the weſt of *Louiſiana*, up the *Miſſiſippi* and the river *Miſſouris*, the ſources of which are unknown to us. This officer, who is a *Canadian*, has the proper qualities for undertaking ſuch an expedition; but the war which aroſe between *France* and *England*, on account of the boundaries

* His name was *Regniſſe*.

ries of theſe countries, has been an obſtacle to the execution of this project.

I can aſſure you, that I ſhould have been very happy to accompany him, both for the honour of my King and for my own ſatisfaction; for, notwithſtanding the fatigues and dangers I have undergone in my voyages, I have never been diſguſted or tired out of patience. Misfortunes paſs like dreams, and I ſee nothing ſo happy as the life of a traveller; he conſtantly ſees new objects, which inſtruct and amuſe him at the ſame time. His mind is cultivated in an agreeable manner, he learns to read the great book of the univerſe, which cannot be read in a library, where there are as many ſyſtems, opinions, and contradictions, as authors. If you were in my place, you would have room to make philoſophical reflections. I am, SIR, &c.

At the fort of Tombekbé, the 30th of September 1759.

P. S. As I may perhaps not meet with an opportunity of writing to you this good while, on account of the war, I ſhall add here an abſtract concerning the differences which have ariſen between

tween us and the *Chactaws*. Some time after the war with the *Tchikachas* or *Chickſaws*, the *French* had ſome quarrels with a party of *Chactaws*, who followed the intereſt of a prince of their nation called the *Red Shoe*, who was inſolent, and committed ſeveral hoſtilities againſt the *French*. M. *de Vaudreuil*, then governor of *Louiſiana*, having heard of this action, and what gave occaſion to it, immediately forbid all the *French* to go to that nation, and commanded them not to ſell them any arms or ammunition, in order to ſtop theſe commotions ſoon, and without bloodſhed.

The Marquis *de Vaudreuil*, after theſe precautions, ſent to the ſovereign of the nation, to inquire whether he was angry with the *French*, as the *Red Shoe*; the ſovereign anſwered, by means of the interpreter, that he was the friend of the *French*; that his general, meaning Prince *Red Shoe*, had loſt his ſenſes.

After this anſwer, he got a preſent, but was much ſurpriſed to find neither arms nor powder and ſhot in it, at a time when he was our friend as before. This proceeding, together with the prohibition of ſelling them arms, which they knew had been iſſued out, redoubled their aſtoniſhment,

niſhment, and brought them to an explication with the governor, who told them, that our people would not treat with them concerning arms and ammunition, as long as the *Red Shoe* had not found his wits again; becauſe, if they got powder, they could not help, being all brothers, to give a ſhare of it to the warriors of captain or chief *Red Shoe*. This anſwer determined them to ſpeak to the tribes that inſulted us; they told them, if they did not ſoon go with the calumet to the *French*, they themſelves would go to war againſt them as rebels. This threat made them aſk peace, and offer a reparation to the *French*, who were not in a condition to ſuſtain a war againſt ſo numerous a nation.

Thus M. *de Vaudreuil*, as a wiſe politician, put a ſtop to this war, without expences to the ſtate, and without expoſing a ſingle man; it was M. *de Grand-pré*, a captain of our troops, who was charged with this important negociation; the Marquis could not pitch upon a fitter perſon. M. *de Grand-pré* is a *Canadian*, and ſerves the King with zeal, bravery, and diſintereſtedneſs. I was upon the point of going to ſerve under him at Fort *Tombekbé* among the *Chactaws*, when I firſt arrived here in 1751.

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LETTER XIX.

To the ſame.

The Author returns to Mobile. *Remarkable Events which happened in the* Cat's Iſle. *Tragic Death of the Sieur* Duroux *governor of that iſle.*

SIR,

I AM now returned from my voyage up the river of *Tombekbé*. I have fulfilled this important and troubleſome miſſion, to the ſatisfaction of my ſuperiors. In waiting for my recal to *New Orleans*, my curioſity led me to viſit the little iſles on the coaſt of *Louiſiana*.

The iſle of *Maſſacre* was the firſt where the *French* made any ſettlements. It got its name becauſe the *French*, when they landed there, found a great quantity of human ſkeletons but

but could not diſtinguiſh whether they were of *Spaniards* or *Indians*.

It has ſince been called the *Dauphin* iſle *. It was peopled by degrees; they built magazines, a fort, and barracks there.

In

* It muſt not be confounded with that which is mentioned in the relation of the firſt voyage of the Eaſt India company to the iſle of *Madagaſcar*, which they called too precipitately the *Dauphin*'s iſland.

The author of this relation, who wrote in 1665, and had done that ſame voyage, agrees that the *Engliſh* and *Dutch*, who were already eſtabliſhed in *India*, were the models which M. *de Colbert* propoſed to imitate, and afterwards to ſurpaſs; but all the projects of that worthy miniſter proved abortive, both by the imprudence and vanity peculiar to the nation, and by the miſmanagement of thoſe who were at the head of affairs.

The ſame author adds, that he only found there "violent "and unſkilful men, ill choſen officers, incapable of the oc- "cupation they were intended for; whereas they ought to "have been men above the coarſer paſſions, with no other "inclinations than for the good of their country, which "ought to be the rule by which every one ſhould be guided "who wiſhes to acquit himſelf with honour."

It ſeems to me, that this uſeful leſſon ſhould be graved into the hearts of all thoſe who go to our colonies with ſome authority.

I have

In 1717, the entrance of the harbour was ſtopped up by a prodigious quantity of ſand, collected together by a hurricane; the whole iſle was almoſt overflowed, and great numbers of cattle were drowned; it was neceſſary to ſeek another port, and they choſe the iſle *Surgere*, which has ſince been called *Ship Iſland*; it has a pretty good harbour. In 1722 M. *de Bienville* tranſported every one from thence to *New Orleans*, and that place became the capital of *Louiſiana*.

Six leagues from the *Ship Iſland* is the *Cats Iſle*, ſo called on account of the number of wild cats which have been found there. This iſle is only remarkable on account of the murders and robberies which have been committed there during the command of two officers, who were ſent thither by M. *de Kerlerec*, governor of *Louiſiana*.

In 1757, he appointed the Sieur *Duroux* chief commander of this iſle, and gave him a detachment

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I have choſen this piece of hiſtory as an example, which has a particular ſimilarity with what is ſeen every day in our colonies. There are, however, governors and intendants, that muſt not be confounded with thoſe who have got fortunes with rapidity, and in an odious manner, from the public miſeries, and from the blood of many unhappy people.

ment of troops from the marines, and from the Swiſs regiment of *Halwyl*.

The Sieur *Duroux* was no ſooner come thither, than he looked upon himſelf as abſolute; he immediately aſſumed the right of having a garden made by the ſoldiers of the garriſon; he likewiſe employed them to make for him lime from ſhells, and charcoal, but he never paid them; and thoſe who refuſed to ſubmit to theſe vexations, were faſtened quite naked to a tree, and expoſed to the inſupportable attacks of the *maringoins* or gnats. This was the puniſhment which the officer made the ſoldiers of his garriſon undergo; an unworthy treatment, unexampled even among barbarians.

The Sieur *Duroux* obliged them to make their bread of the flour ſaved from the wreck of a Spaniſh ſhip, which was loſt on the coaſt; and ſold for his own account the King's flour, intended for the uſe of the garriſon. This repeated bad uſage from this commander, determined ſome ſoldiers to go to *New Orleans*, in order to complain to the governor, to whom they ſhewed ſome of the bad bread they were forced to eat; but M. *de Kerlerec* paid no regard to their juſt remonſtrances, and ſent them back at the

diſcretion of their commander. Then theſe wretches, fearing his reſentment, reſolved to make an example of him, which they executed in ceremony.

One day, when that officer was gone out a hunting in a neighbouring little iſle, the revolted troop took their meaſures for executing their plot, which was to murder the Sieur *Duroux*. So ſtrange a reſolution could only be occaſioned by their not having obtained the deſired juſtice from the governor. If an officer ſuperior to M. *Duroux* had been ſent in his place, and the latter left to command as the ſecond officer, this misfortune would have been avoided.

As he returned from hunting, the ſentinel, perceiving the boat at ſea, hoiſted the *French* flag, upon which the garriſon took to arms, and went out into the field. The rebellious ſoldiers advancing to the ſhore with their corporal at their head, called to the boat by means of a ſpeaking trumpet, according to cuſtom; the Sieur *Duroux* anſwered, "*Commander*;" he lands, and as he ſets his foot on ſhore, the corporal gives the ſignal, and at the ſame inſtant the ſoldiers fire, and their commander falls, pierced with

wounds;

wounds; the ſoldiers then ſtripped him, and threw his corpſe into the ſea. Such was the burial and the puniſhment of this petty tyrant, who was regretted by nobody, for he had no other recommendation than that of the Sieur *Thiton*, the governor's firſt ſecretary. The ſoldiers, become maſters of the iſle, ſet at liberty an inhabitant whoſe name was *Beaudrot*, who had been unjuſtly impriſoned by the late commander. The Sieur *Duroux* had aſſumed the privileges of an admiral of France, and pretended to ſhare with the ſoldiers and inhabitants all that they ſhould ſave of any veſſel wrecked upon the *Cats Iſland*; and all that refuſed to pay him his ſhare were ſeverely puniſhed, as if they had committed ſome great crime. This was the crime of *Beaudrot*; he was put in irons becauſe he would not ſhare ſome goods with the commander, which he had ſaved from the wreck of a *Spaniſh* ſhip called the *Situart*, which was wrecked on the iſle in 1758.

The ſoldiers who had killed M. *Duroux*, having afterwards pillaged the effects belonging to the King in the *Cats Iſle*, took the inhabitant whom they had ſet free, and obliged him to bring them into the road to the Engliſh colony of *Carolina*. When they arrived in the country

of a great Indian chief, whom the Europeans have ſtiled Emperor of the *Kawytas*, they ſent back *Beaudrot* with a certificate, which proved that he had been obliged to ſerve them as a guide. Part of this troop went towards the *Engliſh*; but thoſe who remained among the Indians, were ſoon ſeized by order of M. *de Montberaut*, then governor of the fort at the *Allibamons*; among this laſt party was a corporal of the regiment of *Halwyl*, who, in order to avoid being ſawed aſunder, as is uſual among the Swiſs, killed himſelf with a knife, which he wore hung from his neck, as the Indians do.

M. *de Beaudin*, an officer of the garriſon, was ſent with a detachment, in order to conduct the criminals to *Mobile*. During this interval, the two ſons of *Beaudrot* arrived at *Mobile* from *New Orleans*, and brought, without knowing it, an order from the governor to M. *de Velle*, who commanded at *Mobile*, for arreſting their father; who was in his habitation with great ſecurity; he returned to priſon without reluctance, not knowing that the deſerters whom he had guided were taken. M. *de Velle* tranſmitted the criminals to *New Orleans*, where a court-martial was held to judge them.

Beaudrot

Beaudrot the inhabitant, for guiding the murderers of the governor of *Cats Iſle*, was ſentenced to be broke upon the wheel, and his corpſe to be thrown into the river; which was accordingly executed; a ſoldier ſuffered the ſame puniſhment, and a Swiſs was ſawed alive through the middle of his body.

When one reflects upon the fate of the unhappy *Beaudrot*, it is eaſily perceived that he was judged contrary to form, and by military men, who were ignorant of civil and criminal laws, as he could not have deſerved the cruel puniſhment which he underwent. If politics require that for preſerving public ſafety, no crime ſhould be left unpuniſhed, juſtice demands in favour of humanity, that the judge ſhould always be more afraid of puniſhing too much than too little, according to the axiom, *It is better to let an hundred guilty men eſcape, than to puniſh one ſingle innocent man.*

If the man ought to be puniſhed in order to ſerve as an example, according to this law, the puniſhment might have been mitigated in favour of his wife and four children, whom his death threw into the greateſt deſolation; among the four children was a girl of an admirable

figure, who was admired in the whole colony for her beauty, and ſtill more for her virtue; this charming Creole, and the reſt of the family, are retired into an habitation far from the commerce of men, to lament the death of their unhappy father.

This unhappy man had been ſucceſsfully employed in ſome important negociations with the *Indians*, with whom he was in high eſteem. He ſpoke their language, and, from experience, he knew the ſituation of the country as well as themſelves. He had likewiſe an extraordinary bodily ſtrength. All theſe qualities had ſo far gained him the eſteem and friendſhip of the *Chactaws*, who had adopted him into their nation, that they would certainly have revolted on his account, had not M. *de Velle* * wiſely taken care to keep his impriſonment and execution from coming to their knowledge.

After the tragic death of the Sieur *Duroux*, M. *de Kerlerec* fixed upon the Sieur *de Cha——* to ſucceed to the command of the *Cats Iſland*.

That

* This officer knows that nation perfectly well, having been governor of *Tombekbé* for ſeveral years; the *Indians* eſteemed him much on account of his bravery and diſintereſted behaviour.

That officer set out from *New Orleans* in 1758, with a garrison composed of soldiers and inhabitants of the capital; but the inhabitants were all vagrants, whom the magistrates sent in their own stead, with the governor's consent, for the service of the place.

These vagabonds stayed in the *Cats Isle* as long as those citizens paid them, whose business it was to guard the place. You may well imagine, that a body of such troops, who are not alternately relieved in their posts, according to the rule of service, take opportunities to lay schemes for deserting, as it has happened in many stations of *Louisiana*.

In March 1759 there appeared, in sight of this island, a three-masted ship, belonging to M. *St. Criq*, a merchant, who had bought her at the *Havannah*; her cargo consisted in sugar, coffee, taffias, cables, and some warlike stores. The crew were merely Spanish sailors, who abandoned Captain *St. Criq* upon the coast of *Louisiana* near *Balise*; this obliged him to embark in his long-boat, with a few men who remained with him. He arrived at *New Orleans*, and addressed himself to M. *de Belle-Isle*, fort-major and commander during the governor's

abſence; he begged this officer to give him people, in order to go out in ſearch of his ſhip, which could only be loſt on the coaſt of the *Cats Iſland*.

M. *de Belle-Iſle* gave the Sieur *St. Criq* an intelligent ſerjeant and ten ſoldiers, to navigate his ſhip; at the ſame time he wrote to the Sieur *C——*: "That if this ſhip were loſt near his "ſtation, he ſhould immediately place a guard "on her, and forbid, under pain of death, that "nothing ſhould be unloaded out of her, with-"out the conſent of the Sieur *St. Criq*, the pro-"prietor; and laſtly, that he ſhould not fail "to conform to the orders of the King's marine, "ſpecified under the title *Shipwreck*," &c. Unhappily for the Sieur *St. Criq* the advice of M. *de Belle-Iſle* came too late; the Sieur *de C——* had already taken care to have the cargo of the ſhip unloaded by the ſoldiers and inhabitants, who hid it in the neighbouring ſands; they took all the neceſſary precautions to cover this trick. The Sieur *St. Criq* arrived at the *Cats Iſle*, put the major's letter into the commander's hands, and then went into his ſhip with his people in order to ſearch her; but perceiving that he had forgotten his pocket-book, in which he had the bill of lading, he left her immediately, and

went

went on ſhore to fetch it: a happy accident of Providence! he was but juſt come on ſhore, when his ſhip ſuddenly took fire, and burnt with ſuch fierceneſs, that three men who were in the hold were burnt to death: the others only eſcaped by throwing themſelves into the ſea, and ſwimming on ſhore *.

The Sieur *St. Criq* complained to M. *de Kerlerec*; but after a long delay, the governor *obliged* the captain to terminate his quarrel with the Sieur *de C—*, the latter giving the former the ſum of 1500 livres. This commander being recalled to *New Orleans*, gave himſelf up to ſuch debaucheries, that he ſcandalized the whole colony.

* At the time when the Sieur *St. Criq* reclaimed his ſhip with *M. de Bell-Iſle*, and received his orders addreſſed to M. *de C——*, to take care of the preſervation of the cargo, the governor of the *Cats Iſle* wrote to M. *de Belle-Iſle* himſelf: "That, on ſuch a day, a ſhip with three maſts was loſt in "ſight of his ſtation, and he having made ſigns without re-"ceiving any anſwer, he took it to belong to the enemy, "who kept his men in cloſe quarters; that he having arm-"ed the boat belonging to his ſtation, and going into it "with all his people, after getting no anſwer upon a re-"peated ſignal, came on board the ſhip, but found no living "ſoul in her, and the cargo taken out of her; he only "found a cut cable upon the deck, and ſaw that the ſhip "was bored for twenty-ſix guns.

ny. When he had consumed all that he had gained by his iniquitous practices, he went on board a Dutch ship from *Curaçao*, a colony belonging to that republic. The opinions are divided upon the clandestine evasion of this officer; some believe, that he escaped in order to avoid the punishments which his crimes deserved; others think he was charged with papers to court from the governor: the event will determine this.

It is sufficiently proved by this restitution of 1500 livres on the part of the Sieur *de C*——, that this commander had pillaged the ship of Captain *St. Criq*, getting 60,000 livres by it, according to his own confession to the Sieur *la Perliere*, who succeeded him in the government of *Cats Island*. He has however escaped the capital punishment which this piracy deserved *. For the quoted order says, "That all who shall "endanger the life of shipwrecked persons, and "lay hands upon their goods, shall be punished "with death." This crime is so enormous, that, though one were not a Christian, natural religion

* The Sieur *de C*——, hoping to enjoy the fruits of his iniquity in France, died there as he had lived, that is, in a debauch, by a decree of Providence.

religion engages us to assist the unhappy in time of danger. Such were the officers in whom the governor of *Louisiana* put confidence.

We have just received advice, that a party of warriors of the nation of *Cherokees*, commanded by their chief of war called *Wolf*, have taken the fort *London* belonging to Great Britain, and that the English governor of it, M. *Damery*, has been killed by the Indians, who have put earth in his mouth, saying, You dog, since you are so very greedy of earth, be satisfied and gorged with it; they have done the same to others.

If I do not set out for *France*, I shall write to you from *New Orleans*, concerning the discord between the two chiefs of the colony, M. *de Kerlerec* the governor, and M. *de Rochemore* the *ordonnateur*. I am, SIR, &c.

At Fort Mobile, the 10*th of January* 1760.

LETTER XX.

To the same.

The Author goes to New Orleans. *Cause of the Troubles which agitate that Place. Moving Relation of M.* de Belle-Isle's *Captivity among the* Attakapas. *Curious Animals and salutary Simples to be met with in* Louisiana.

SIR,

I HAVE so much news to communicate to you, that I know not where to begin: I wrote to you from *Tombekbé*, that every thing was in confusion in the capital; indeed every body talks of quarrels and divisions; avidity and interest are every where lighting the torch of discord. As I neither have, nor will have, any part in all these quarrels, and as I cannot satisfy my zeal for the king's service in this colony, where every thing is in disorder,

I have

I have not ceaſed to demand leave to return to *France*. The moſt faithful ſubjects, who will do their duty, are contradicted and diſgraced, and their zeal is rewarded with the moſt cruel perſecutions. But without enquiring minutely into the ſufferings of a number of brave officers, moſt of them ſtill alive, I ſhall only ſpeak of thoſe which M. *de Belle-Iſle* has undergone. This worthy officer, whoſe probity and unqueſtionable conduct have gained him the good will and eſteem of all worthy men, and eſpecially of the general officers, ſuch as M. *de Perier*, M. *de Bienville*, and the Marquis *de Vaudreuil*, &c. well deſerves that I ſhould tell his ſtory to you, having heard it from himſelf with all its circumſtances.

I ſhall give you an account of what has happened during the forty-five years which he ſerved the king in this colony *. I ſhall ſay nothing but truth,

* The hiſtory of M. *de Belle-Iſle*, Chevalier of the royal military order of *St. Louis*, Major of *New Orleans*, and who has formerly ſerved as Major General of the troops of the marine in *Louiſiana*, has been inſerted in a *Relation of Louiſiana* printed at Paris in 1758. The author of it left the colony in 1733, has forgotten the moſt intereſting circumſtances, and the facts he has mentioned, have been diſowned by M.

de

truth, though ſome circumſtances may appear very wondrous.

As I know the goodneſs of your heart, I am ſure you will pity the unhappy fate of this poor officer; great ſouls are not aſhamed to ſhew that they are touched by the misfortunes of others: even the *Indians* ſay, that he who is not ſenſible to the ſufferings of his brothers, is unworthy of bearing the name of a man, and that he ought to be avoided as the peſt of ſociety.

In 1719, M. *de Crozat* put *Louiſiana* into the hands of the Weſt India company, who ſent a thouſand men to people it. M. *de Belle-Iſle* embarked in one of their ſhips at port *l'Orient*, with ſome other officers and volunteers, for the new colony. The winds and currents carried the ſhip to the bay of *St. Bernard* in the Mexican gulph. The captain ſent his boat on ſhore in order to fetch water. M. *de Belle-Iſle* and four of his companions went into the boat with the captains conſent. Whilſt the boat returned to the ſhip, the officers went a hunting: the boat came on ſhore again, and having taken in

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de Belle-Iſle himſelf: my relation is an abſtract of a manuſcript memoir, written by that officer's own hand.

in the neceſſary proviſion of freſh water, returned on board without the young officers, who were not yet returned.

The captain is impatient, weighs anchor and ſets ſail, leaving the five paſſengers on ſhore. Their agitation and anxiety, when they returned to the ſhore and found the boat and ſhip gone, may well be imagined. Thus being abandoned in an unknown country, they erred for a long time upon the deſart coaſt, having the ſea on one ſide, and a country inhabited by a nation of cannibals on the other. They did not venture to quit the marſhy ſhores of the ſea; they were in ſuch deſpair of finding a remedy for their misfortunes that they knew not what to do: this alone was capable to make them loſe their ſenſes; and then the thought of falling into the hands of cannibals, troubled the imagination of theſe young Europeans. They went along the ſhore in the miſtaken opinion, that the ſhip was gone to the weſt, imploring divine mercy, and complaining of their unhappy fate. They lived upon inſects and herbs, not knowing whether they were good or bad; what was moſt troubleſome to them was the abundance of gnats in that place, as they had nothing to defend themſelves againſt them. They continued ſe-

veral

veral days in this ſituation. M. *de Belle-Iſle* had taken a young dog from the ſhip, which was very fond of him. His companions were often tempted to kill him; their hunger was extreme: M. *de Belle-Iſle* gave the dog up to them, but would not kill it himſelf; one of his companions ſeized the dog; but he was ſo weak, that as he was going to ſtrike with the knife, the dog eſcaped, ran into the woods, and was not ſeen again. The four unhappy officers died with hunger one after another, in ſight of M. *de Belle-Iſle*, who did all he could to dig them graves in the earth, or rather in the ſand, with his own hands, to preſerve their ſad remains from the voraciouſneſs of wild beaſts: he paid this tribute to human nature in ſighing over its miſeries, nothing but the ſtrength of his conſtitution could make him ſurvive them. He was reſolute enough, in order to ſubſiſt, to eat the worms which he found in rotten wood. Some days after the death of his comrades, he ſaw at a diſtance his dog holding ſomething in his mouth; he called him, the creature came to him fawning, and with great demonſtrations of joy, threw at his feet an *opoſſum*; the dog howled, as if he would ſay, I bring thee ſomething to ſupport life. The opoſſums are good eating, and of the ſize of a ſucking pig. M.

de

de Belle-Iſle, having no other company than his dog, looked about for food every where. At night he always made a little intrenchment at the foot of a tree, in order to ſhelter himſelf againſt the wild beaſts. One day a tyger * came near the place, where he ſlept; his dog watched by his ſide, he ſaw the tyger, and ran at it with a prodigious howl. M. *de Belle-Iſle* awoke, and haſtened to his aſſiſtance; the tyger let the dog looſe, but had wounded him: his maſter was obliged to kill him, leſt he ſhould turn mad, and afterwards he eat him. Then being left alone in this deſart place, he fell on his knees, lifted up his hands to heaven, and thanked the Almighty for preſerving him till now; and reſigning himſelf to Providence he went into the country in order to ſeek for men. He ſoon found foot-ſteps, and followed them to the banks of a river, where finding a *piragua*, he croſſes the river in it. On the oppoſite ſhore were ſome *Indians*, drying human fleſh and fiſh; they were of the nation of the *Attakapas* †;

* By this muſt always be underſtood the *American* tyger, i. e. the *brown cat* of *P. Synopſis of Quad.* p. 179, and the *Cagacuara* of *Piſo* and *Margrave* in their *Nat. Hiſt. Braſil.*

† This name ſignifies men-eaters among the *American* nations.

they went towards M. *de Belle-Isle*, whom they took for a ghoſt, becauſe he was lean; he pointed to his mouth, and made ſigns of being hungry. The Indians would not kill him becauſe he was exceſſively lean; they offered him ſome human fleſh, but he preferred fiſh, of which he eat greedily. The *Indians* looked at this cloathed man, ſtripped him naked and divided his cloaths among themſelves; they then carried him to their village in order to fatten him. There he had the good fortune to become the *dog* * of an old widow. He recovered his ſtrength gradually; but was extremely ſad, conſtantly apprehending, that his hoſts would ſacrifice him to their falſe deities, and afterwards make a feaſt of his fleſh; his imagination was always ſtruck with the terrible ſight of the feaſts which thoſe barbarians made of the fleſh of their fatteſt priſoners of war, which I cannot help ſhuddering at, whilſt I relate it. He always expected to receive a blow with the club, as ſoon as he ſhould be fat. The Indians held a council,

tions. When they take an enemy in the wars, they make a great feaſt and eat his fleſh. They commonly live upon fiſh and drink the *Caſſine*. They can ſpeak by ſigns, and hold long pantomime converſations.

* An expreſſion which ſignifies *ſlave*.

cil, in which they reſolved that it would be ſhameful and cowardly to kill a man, that did not come to them to do any harm, but to demand their hoſpitality; in conſequence of this reſolution, he remained a ſlave of the widow. The firſt days of his ſlavery, though it was not a heavy one, were very diſagreeable to him, becauſe he was obliged to take care of the little children of theſe men-eaters, and to carry them on his ſhoulders, which was very troubleſome to him; for he was naked like them, having no more cloaths than were ſufficient to make his nakedneſs leſs indecent; but the widow abovementioned, having taken him under her protection, he was better treated in the ſequel.

As M. *de Bell-Iſle* was young and ſtrong, he acquitted himſelf very well of his functions as a ſlave, and even gained the good graces of his miſtreſs ſo much, that ſhe adopted him, and he was then ſet at liberty, and looked upon as one belonging to the nation. He ſoon learnt the manner of converſing in pantomimes, and the art of uſing the bow and arrows as well as they could do it. They took him into the wars, where he ſhewed them his dexterity, by killing one of their enemies with an arrow in their preſence, he was then acknowledged a true warrior.

Another *Indian* having killed a roebuck, they dried the flesh of the man and the roe, to make use of it as provisions on their expeditions. One day as they were walking, M. *de Belle-Isle* being hungry, asked for something to eat. An *Indian* gave him some human flesh, saying it was of the roe-buck. M. *de Belle-Isle* eat of it without knowing the cheat; and the Indian afterwards said to him: *Formerly thou didst make difficulty, but now thou canst eat man's flesh as well as ourselves:* at these words M. *de Belle-Isle* threw up all he had eaten.

About two years after his captivity, some deputies arrived at the *Attakapas*, from a nation who sent them the calumet of peace. A kind providential care! This nation lived in *New Mexico*, and were the neighbours of the *Natchitoches*, where M. *de Hucheros de Saint Denis* commanded, who was beloved and respected by the deputies of this nation, though they lived on Spanish ground. After attentively considering M. *de Belle-Isle*, they told the *Attakapas*, that in the country from whence they came, there were white men like him: the *Attakapas* said he was a *dog*, whom they had found towards the great lake, where his comrades were starved to death; that they had brought him to their habitations, where

where a woman had made him her ſlave; that they had taken him to war againſt a nation which they conquered in a battle, and that he had diſtinguiſhed himſelf on that occaſion, and ſhewed them his ſkill in ſending an arrow, which killed one of their adverſaries; that they had for that reaſon adopted him, and received him as a warrior.

This officer, who heard their converſation, did as if he took no notice of it; and immediately conceived the idea of returning to his country: he took one of the Indian deputies apart; and queſtioned him much about the white men he had ſeen. M. *de Belle-Iſle* had luckily preſerved his commiſſion in a box; he made ſome ink with ſoot, and wrote with a crow-quill the following words: "*To the firſt chief of the* "*white men.* I am ſuch and ſuch a perſon, aban- "doned at the bay of *St. Bernard*; my comrades "died of hunger and wretchedneſs before my "face, and I am captive at the *Attakapas.*" This unhappy officer gave his commiſſion to the *Indian*, telling him it was ſome ſpeaking paper; that, by preſenting it to the chief of the *French* in his country, he would be well received. The *Indian* believed, that this letter had ſomething divine in it, becauſe it was to ſpeak for him to

the *French*. His countrymen wanted to take it from him; but he escaped by swimming across a river; and lest he should wet the letter, he held it up in the air. This *Indian*, after a journey of one hundred and fifty leagues, arrived at the *Natchitoches* *, an Indian nation. The French commander there at that time being M. *Hucheros de St. Denis*, an officer of distinction, known for having made the first journey over land from *Louisiana* to *Mexico*, where he married the *Spanish* governor's niece. The Indian gave him M. *de Belle-Isle*'s letter, and M. *de St. Denis* received him very well, and made him many presents; after which, this officer began to cry after the manner of the Indians, who asked what ailed him? He answered, he wept for his brother who was a captive among the *Attakapas*. As M. *de Saint Denis* was in great esteem with the nations about him, the *Indian* who brought the letter promised to fetch M. *de Belle-Isle*, and some other Indians joined him.

M. *de Saint Denis* gave them some shirts and a hat for M. *de Belle-Isle*, and they set out immediately, ten in number, on horseback, and armed

* A station near *Mexico*. There is a settlement of Indians on the *Riviere Rouge*, or *Red-river*.

ed with guns; promising to M. *de Saint Denis* to return in two *moons* time with his brother upon a horse, which they led with them.

On arriving at the *Attakapas*, they discharged their fire-arms several times, the explosion of which the other Indians took to be thunder: they gave M. *de Belle Isle* the letter of M. *de Saint Denis*, which mentioned, that he had nothing to fear with those Indians, and that he rejoiced beforehand that he should see him. The joy which this letter gave to the officer is inexpressible; however he feared that the *Attakapas* would oppose his departure. But the chief of the deputation made him get quickly on horseback, and went off with his whole troop. The *Attakapas* being frightened with the report of the muskets, did not venture to say any thing, and the woman who had adopted M. *de Belle-Isle* shed tears. Thus this officer escaped from a captivity, which might otherwise have lasted as long as his life.

The *Indian* who carried off M. *de Belle-Isle* was as proud as *Hernando Cortez* when he conquered *Montezuma*, the last emperor of *Mexico*. They arrived at the *Natchitoches*, but did not find M. *de Saint Denis* there; for he was gone to *Biloxis*,

which was then the chief place of *Louisiana*, *New Orleans* being not yet built.

M. *d'Orvilliers*, who commanded at the *Natchitoches* in M. *Saint Denis*'s absence, sent M. *de Belle-Isle* and his escort to M. *de Bienville*, then governor of *Louisiana*. That general embraced him, being happy to see him, and liberally rewarded his deliverers. Every one complimented him on his escape from this captivity; M. *de Bienville* gave him a suit of cloaths.

This officer has since been very useful to the governor, by his knowledge of the customs of the *Attakapas*, whom the Spaniards of *New Mexico* could never subdue, as they have done with the other nations of their empire.

M. *de Bienville* sent a present to the *Attakapas*, and another to the widow who had adopted and protected M. *de Belle-Isle*.

These people, who did not expect this generosity from the governor, sent ambassadors * to him to thank him, and to make an alliance with the *French*.

* The chief of the embassy addressed the following speech to M. de *Bienville*, which M. de *Belle-Isle* interpreted; "My father,

French. M. *de Belle-Isle*'s mistress attended in person; since this period the *French* have always been humanely treated by the *Attakapas*, who have at their desire left off the barbarous custom of eating human flesh.

When the *Attakapas* came to *New Orleans*, they were well received by all the *French*, in gratitude of the reception M. *de Belle-Isle* had met with among them; for without them, he would have undergone the unhappy fate of his companions.

M. *de Bienville* sometimes procured himself the diversion of a pantomime with these cannibals, by means of M. *de Belle-Isle*, who, as their pupil, conversed with them by gestures. The *Attakapas* are armed with bows and very great arrows; they cultivate maize, as the other *North American*

" father, the white man, whom thou seest here, is thy flesh " and blood, he was united to us by adoption. His brothers " were starved to death, if my nation had found them sooner, " they would live still and enjoy the same prerogative."

The hospitality shewn to M. de *Belle-Isle* by the *Attakapas*, convinced us, that we must regard their cruelty only as a fault of education, and that nature has planted sentiments of humanity in their breast.

American nations do. This part of the world is of such an extent, that it has not yet been possible to become acquainted with all the nations in it, nor with its limits.

In 1759, M. *de Marigni de Mandeville* *, an officer of distinction, formed the design, with the consent of the governor of *Louisiana*, of making new discoveries towards the isle of *Barataria*, of which we know the coasts but very imperfectly: with this intent he made a general map of the colony. This officer has discovered this unknown country at his own expence, with indefatigable zeal, which characterizes a worthy citizen, who is always occupied for the glory of his prince, and the enlargement of his possessions.

I have endeavoured, in my preceding letters, to give you an abridgment of the history of the country, from the time of its discovery till now, and an idea of the situation of its commerce, and likewise of every thing that seemed instructive and amusing to me. I do not believe I have omitted any thing material, I shall now finish our

* See the Memoirs of this officer, printed at Paris, by *Guillaume Desprès*, in the ruë *S. Jacques* 1765.

our correſpondence by ſome obſervations on the natural hiſtory of this colony, of which you could learn nothing from the ſpecial relations that are publiſhed. You muſt know then, Sir, that all the fruit-trees which have been tranſported thither from *Europe* ſucceed very well there. M. *Fazende*, one of the ſuperior council of *Louiſiana*, has brought a fig-tree from *Provence*, the figs of which are excellent; as this tree is propagated by layers, it richly ſupplies all the habitations with them. Among the fruit peculiar to this country, there is one called a battledoe, it has the figure and taſte of a pickled cucumber. This fruit is very common about *Mobile*, and it is very refreſhing.

The *piakmine* is a kind of medlar, called *ougouflé* by the Indians; this fruit, which is no bigger than the European medlar, is yellow and red like an apricot; it is a very good aſtringent, and an excellent remedy to ſtop the dyſentery and bloody flux. The Indians make bread of it, in the form of ginger-bread, and dry it for their long voyages *.

The

* The piakmine has yet another virtue; take a quantity of its ſeeds, pound them, then infuſe freſh water upon them, which

The *Jaſmine* fruit has the form and colour of a lemon; it is odoriferous, and taſtes like Banian figs; it ſeeds reſemble beans; they are a poiſon to hogs ‡.

Here are a number of orange and peach trees; and both the oranges and peaches are ſo common in this colony, that they are left under the trees to rot.

There are apple-trees and plum-trees; and whole foreſts of walnut-trees; of which there is a white kind or the *hiccory*, and another black; both kinds bear nuts; they are as in Europe of different goodneſs for eating; there are likewiſe ſome walnuts as big as the fiſt, but they are bitter, having very thick and hard ſhells. There is a tree which bears a fruit called *pacannes*; they are oblong like almonds, and more delicious: the

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which muſt ſtand upon them twenty-four hours: ſtrain the water through a cloth and keep it in a bottle. When you are attacked with the gravel, drink a glaſs full of the infuſion faſting, and continue to do it till you are cured †.

† This is perhaps the perſimon, *dioſpyros Virginiana* Linn. F.

‡ This plant ſeems to be one of the various kinds of *anona*, which grow over all the warmer parts of *North-America*. F.

the Indians make an oil of it, to ſeaſon their *ſagamitty* with.

It is a circumſtance worthy of admiration, to ſee the providence of the Creator, who has planted ſuch a number of fruit-trees of various kinds in this part of the new world. There are thouſands of curious animals, known before neither by their ſhape nor by their name, and of which men of the preceding ages have not even had an idea.

There are red and likewiſe white bays; the latter bears a white flower like a tulip; it is an exceeding buſhy tree, and would be an ornament to the gardens of European monarchs: the Indians call it the tree of peace *.

Near the banks of rivers there are vines, which climb ſo high along the trees, that when the grapes are taken off, they can often make a whole barrel full of wine from a ſingle ſtock. Theſe vines grow without cultivation, and the wine that is made of them is very harſh

* This is probably either the *tuliptree*, *liriodendron tulipifera*. Linn. or the *laurus æſtivalis*. Linn. F.

harſh *. There are many mulberry-trees † in the woods, and their berries are very ſweet; there are likewiſe ſome that always keep the figure of ſhrubs, and their berries are made uſe of for jellies.

There is a tree in the woods full of ſpines of ſix inches in length; its wood is ſo hard, that it makes the edge of the hatchets blunt, and ſometimes breaks them. The Indians, by means of fire, make mortars of it to cruſh their maize in. This tree bears pods about a foot long like *caſſia*; the fruit they contain is gummy and ſticking, having ſeveral ſeeds like beans. It is an excellent laxative, and the Indians take it as a purge.

There are reſinous trees (ſuch as pines, &c.) in the woods, which produce reſin and tar; there are likewiſe many trees, from which a kind of gum like turpentine runs down.

There

* The American foreſts have three kinds of vines; the *vitis labruſca*, *vulpina*, and *arborea*, Linn. And this, here mentioned, ſeems to be the laſt. F.

† The *morus rubra* Linn. is the mulberry-tree, known to grow in *North America*. F.

There is a ſhrub which we call *cirier*, or the wax-tree, and it reſembles an olive-tree. It bears little berries like juniper, they are melted in water *, and give a kind of wax for candles; this wax is of a fine green, and has an aromatic ſmell. The Sieur *Alexandre*, a ſurgeon and chemiſt, is the firſt that diſcovered it here. The academy of ſciences gave him a penſion for this diſcovery. He has likewiſe found the method of bleaching it, as we do bees wax in *Europe*.

Whilſt I was in *Louiſiana*, the inhabitants got from *St. Domingo* plants of ſugar-canes, in order to make plantations of them. M. *Dubreuil*, who commands the militia of citizens, was the firſt planter that built a ſugar-mill at *New Orleans*.

It is known, that ſugar is made of the juice of a reed or cane, which is propagated by layers; it grows tall and thick, in proportion to the goodneſs of the ſoil. The canes have joints at certain diſtances; when theſe are ripe, which is eaſily known by the yellow hue which they get, they are cut above the firſt joint, which has no juice; the leaves on both ſides are plucked off; the

* Boiling water. The tree is the candleberry myrtle, *myrica cerifera*. Linn. F.

the canes are made up into bundles, and brought to the mill, where they are cruſhed between two wooden cylinders, covered with ſteel. A negro puts the canes between the cylinders, which preſs all the juice out, which is received in a great hollow, from whence it goes through a leaden pipe into a reſervoir, which leads it into the place where the ovens are, which are deſtined to boil it in great boilers. When the juice is refined, it is poured into another boiler; it muſt be continually ſtirred, and boiled till it has a proper conſiſtency; and when the ſugar is got to the firſt ſtate of perfection, it is put into forms of earthen ware, in order to be refined; it acquires the ſecond degree of perfection by the opening being covered with clay to prevent the air from acting upon the ſugar, and that it may not harden too much before it is refined by the ſeparation of ſyrups and melaſſes.

It is with the ſcum of ſugar that they make taffia or kill-devil. This liquor is prepared as brandy is in *France*; and goes through the ſtill. The *Europeans* in *America* prefer it to brandy for curing of wounds. They likewiſe make rum with it.

In

In the country of the *Illinois* there is a little ſhrub, about three feet high, which bears a fruit of the ſize of a ſmall apple, and of the taſte of citrons. The woods there likewiſe contain cheſnuts, and hazel-nuts of the ſame kind as in *France*.

Louiſiana abounds with good ſimples; among them is the *ginſeng*, the root of which is an excellent reſtorative, *jalap*, *rhubarb*, *ſnake-root*, *ſarſaparilla*, and *St. John's wort* *, of which they make an excellent oil for healing of wounds. The following is the Indian doctor's method of making the oil. They take an earthen pot, and put the flowers of St. John's wort in it, and ſome bear's oil above it; the pot or vaſe is well ſtopped up, and expoſed to

* *Ginſeng* is the plant ſo much in requeſt in China; it is *Panax quinquefolium*, Linn. See Oſbeck's Voy. to China, vol. i. p. 222. and Kalm's Travels into North America, vol. iii. p. 114. and Cateſby's Nat. Hiſt. of Carolina, app. t. 16. ——*Jalap* is the *Mirabilis* of Linnæus, there are ſeveral ſpecies of it.——*Rhubarb* is the *Rheum* Linn. but probably not the true one.——*Snake-root*, perhaps the *Polygala Senega*, Linn. or elſe an *Ariſtolochia*.——Sarſaparilla, *Smilax ſarſaparilla*, Linn.——St. John's wort, *Hypericum*, Linn. there are many plants of this genus in *North America*; and it is among the *deſiderata* of the botaniſt to know what ſpecies are employed for medicinal uſes. F.

the morning ſun; the heat concentrated in the vaſe turns the oil of a red colour, and gives it an agreeable ſmell, which cures and purifies all kinds of wounds. There are even plants which have the virtue of ſerving as counter-poiſons; but it is a rare and precious gift to man to know them, and to know how to make a proper uſe of them; the Creator has not granted this knowledge to all men. There are numerous ſimples proper for cleanſing the maſs of blood, and of which the Indians have a peculiar knowledge.

There are foreſts of *ſaſſafras* trees *, the wood of which is uſed in phyſic, and for dying; there is likewiſe the *copal* tree †, whoſe gum is an excellent balſam, equal in goodneſs to the balſam of Peru; the animals which are wounded by hunters, cure themſelves by rubbing againſt the tree from which this balſam exſudes, which has an aromatic ſmell. The *Indians* have in their huts bitter gourds and calabaſhes, of which latter they make a pectoral ſyrup; *maiden-hair*, which is a good pectoral medicine, and the *caſ-*

ſine,

* Saſſafras-tree grows all over North America, it is *Laurus ſaſſafras*, Linn.

† *Copal* tree grows only in the ſouthern part of North America, *Rhus copallinum*, Linn.

ſine, which is a good diuretic *. When the doſe is ſtrong, it excites a kind of convulſions; which, however, ceaſe immediately. The *Allibamon* Indians call it the *liquor of valour*. The natives of *America* value their ſimples more than all the gold of *Mexico* and *Peru*.

You find ſeveral ſorts of curious animals in *Louiſiana*, which are unknown in *Europe*.

The wild ox is very large and ſtrong; the French and the Indians make various uſes of it; they eat its fleſh, which they ſalt or dry; they make coverings of its hide. The wild bull is covered with a very fine wool, with which they make good matraſſes; of its tallow they make candles, and its pizzles afford cords to the Indian bows. The Indians work its horns, and make them into *micouens* or ſpoons, and into powder-horns.

* Bitter gourds, *Coloquintes*, *Cucumis colocynthis*, Linn.—Calabaſhes, *Cucurbita lagenaria*, Linn.—Maiden-hair, *Adiantum pedatum*, Linn. grows all over *North America*, from *Canada* down to *Virginia*, and is much eſteemed as a medicinal herb. See *Kalm*'s Trav. to North Amer. vol. iii. p. 113.—Caſſine is the *Prinos glaber*, Linn. mentioned in Letter XVI. p. 249. F.

The wild ox has a bunch or hump on its back * like a camel. It has long hair on the head like a goat, and wool on its body like ſheep, which the Indian women ſpin into threads.

On going towards the head of the river *Miſſouris*, you find all ſorts of wild beaſts. The wild goats and their young ones are very common at certain ſeaſons †. Theſe animals are very lively and pretty; the females have double furrows or ringlets to their horns, and are not ſo big as ours: the French that eat of them have aſſured me, that the young veniſon was as good as

* The hump is ſituated on the ſhoulders. The animal has been deſcribed by *Linnæus* under the name of *Bos biſon*, and drawn by *Cateſby* in his *Nat. Hiſt. of Carolina*, app. t. 20. and in Mr. *Pennant's Synopſis of Quadrupeds*, p. 8. t. II. f. 2. F.

† This animal ſeems to be of the antelope kind, perhaps the *Temamaſama* of *Hernandez*, an animal which hitherto has not been noticed by our zoologiſts. It ſeems not to be an animal belonging to the goat kind, on account of the double ringlets or *cornichons* mentioned by the author. This would be perhaps a new animal; and however it be, it will deſerve the attention of our natural hiſtorians. And as the Engliſh dominions now extend to the river Miſſiſippi, it would certainly be worth while to deſcribe the animals upon that river, and thoſe that fall into it. F.

as the beſt mutton. As the *Indians* of theſe parts do not uſe our muſkets, they kill them with arrows; for theſe animals feed in the mountains, and when they are wounded they cannot climb ſo eaſily, and by that means the *Indians* catch them.

The hunters have likewiſe told me, that they had found a large kind of eagle in the woods, of the ſpecies called the *royal eagle* *.

I think it my duty to mention to you the ſingular manner in which the Indians hunt and take theſe birds, which the northern nations eſteem very much, becauſe they adorn their calumets of peace with eagle's feathers, which they call *feathers of valour*.

This kind of hunting is reſerved for the diverſion of old warriors, as it requires no exerciſe. The old man who intends to take eagles, firſt of all examines the places which are moſt frequented by them; after that, he brings fleſh, the entrails of animals or dead ſnakes to thoſe ſpots, and faſtens theſe baits to ſome fixed wood. The

* The royal eagle is the *Falco Chryſaëtos*, Linn. or *golden eagle*, Penn. Br. Zool. fol. 61. tab. A. & in 8vo vol. i. p. 121. F.

firſt eagle that comes there eats of it, grows familiar with the place, and attracts others of his ſpecies thither, that greedily diſpute the prey with each other. Then the old man digs a kind of *niche* or hollow at the top of the hill; he makes a chimney or vent to it which he ſtops up with a bundle of fagots, on which he places the baits: he ſuffers the bird to eat its fill; then he puts his hands, which he has wrapt in a little ſack of leather through ſome ſtraw under the faggots; takes hold of the eagle's legs, pulls it down, wraps it in his ox-hide, and ſo kills it. If he is lucky enough to take five or ſix of them, he is content, becauſe the feathers are an article of trade throughout *North-America*. This way of hunting is not very troubleſome: the baits are taken together by the old man's children, and the women ſend him victuals.

You likewiſe ſee hares* and white bears whoſe ſkin is very fine and ſoft.† The *tygers* of Louiſiana differ from thoſe of Africa and South America,

* The American hares are already declared by *Prof. Kalm*, vol. p. 105. to differ from the European ones; ſo that is improper to think the American ones to be the ſame F.

† The white bear here mentioned, cannot be the great *Polar*

rica, becauſe they have no ſpots.‡ They take the roe-deer as cats do mice. As to the *tyger-cats*.§ they kill the wild oxen in the following manner. They get upon a tree, in a little path where the oxen are uſed to go to the river; and as they come by, the tyger-cats fall upon the necks of the oxen, bite through their throats and

lar bear, Penn. Synn. Quad. p. 192. to 20. f. 1. as this latter is only to be met with in the moſt frigid parts of our globe; and the ſoft hair here mentioned will not admit to think of the polar bear, whoſe hair is like briſtles. The common black bear is ſometimes found quite white in Siberia, and therefore it is not improbable that ſome of theſe white bears are found in the interior parts of *North America*. Beſides this, I find it neceſſary, here to obſerve, that the *black Virginia bear* ſeems to me to be a ſpecies different from our European bears, my reaſons for this opinion are theſe: *firſt*, the European bear has never ſo black a coat as the Virginian, *ſecondly*, the ſnout of the Virginian is longer, and the head ſmaller than in our European ones; *thirdly*, the European bear is more clumſy than the Virginian. F.

‡ The North American tyger is the *Cuguacara* of Marggrave, or the *brown Cat*. *Penn. Syn. quad.* p. 179. In South America it is immenſely fierce on account of the heat of the climate, and miſtakenly called a lion. F.

§ The American tyger-cat is the *pichou du ſud* mentioned in *Kalm's Travels, vol.* 3. p. 275, and *Penn. Syn. quad. Cayenne Cat.* p. 182.

kill them; their ſtrength and their horns are rendered uſeleſs by this treachery.

The *wood rat* or *Indian-rat* is of the ſize of an European cat; its head is like the head of a fox, it has feet like a monkey, and the tail of a rat.* This animal is very curious; I once killed a female that had ſeven young ones; what is moſt ſurpriſing is to ſee them all ſtick faſt to the teats, where they grow, and continue till they are able to run about; then they drop into a membrane that forms a pouch: thoſe young ones which I ſaw were as big as new-born mice; nature has furniſhed the female with this pouch under the belly, which is covered with hair, as a retreat for her young ones, when they are purſued, by means of which the mother can ſave them and carry them off. Their fleſh taſtes like that of a ſucking pig; their hair is whitiſh, and they have likewiſe a down or wool like the beaver. This pretended rat, lives in the woods upon the ſeeds of beech-trees, upon cheſnuts, walnuts, and acorns. I have often eaten of them on my voyages: their fat is very white and fine; a fine pomatum or unguent is made of it for the Hemorrhoids.

Here

* This is the Virginian *Opoſſum*. *Penn. Syn. quad.* p. 294. and *Didelphis marſupialis*. Linn.

Here is likewiſe an animal, which they call the *wood-cat*; it is of the ſize of a fox, and nothing but its tail is like that of a cat. This creature is very fond of oyſters; it reſembles a marmot in its figure; and may be tamed like a dog, licking and fawning upon its maſter, whom it follows every where; it takes its food with its paws, like a monkey. I believe theſe were the *dumb dogs* which the Spaniards found, when they diſcovered the Antilles or Caribee iſlands.*

There are four ſorts of ſquirrels in Louiſiana; large, black, red, grey, and little ones of the ſize of little rats; the latter are called flying ſquirrels, on account of a membrane which joins their four legs, and which they extend in jumping from one tree to another.†

The *French* and the *Indians* have often told me that the ſnakes have the power of faſcinating ſquir-

* This animal here called *wood-cat* is common all over the Britiſh colonies in America, and known by the name of *Raccoon*, ſee Penn Syn. quad, p. 199. *Urſus luſcus*. Linn. and Kalm's Travels into North America, vol. i. t. 2. p. 96, 208. F.

† Black ſquirrel, *ſciurus niger*. Linn.—red ſquirrel *ſciurus ſtriatus*. Linn.—grey ſquirrel, *ſciurus cinereus*. Linn.—flying ſquirrel, *ſciurus volans*. Linn. F.

ſquirrels; this I wiſhed to ſee with my own eyes. I cannot avoid communicating my obſervations on this ſubject to you. I was once hunting at the *Illinois*, in a wood which abounded with hazelnuts, which is a very nice food for ſquirrels; they were likewiſe very plentiful there; I heard upon a tree, under which I ſtood, the ſad cry of a ſquirrel which ſeemed frightened; I did not know what ailed it; at laſt I perceived a ſnake hung over a branch of the tree, looking upwards, waiting for its prey; and the unhappy ſquirrel, after leaping from branch to branch, fell into the mouth of the ſnake, which ſwallowed it.

Without entering into a phyſical detail, I imagine the ſquirrel was faſcinated by the ſnake in the following manner. The antipathy of the ſquirrel, makes it look upon the ſnake as faſtened to the tree, when it ſees it thus immoveable, and hung upon a branch; therefore inſtead of remarking that it is only a ſnare, laid by its adverſary, it jumps from branch to branch, as it were to inſult the ſnake; when by jumping round the reptile, the latter ſees it near enough to dart upon, ſeize and ſwallow it.† Many authors pretend

† This is a very ingenious explication, but it ſuppoſes, that we muſt attribute to the ſquirrel nicer feelings, than animals

pretend that the ſnakes have an attractive power.

The cunnnig of ſnakes is admirable; I have ſeen ſome, which perceiving that I looked at them, did not ſtir at all, in order to make me believe they were not there, and always continued in the ſame attitude; but as ſoon as I went aſide to get a ſtick or ſtone to cruſh their heads, the ſnakes made off and I did not find them again when I returned. This is an experiment I have often made in the deſarts which I have gone through, and where theſe animals are common.

There are many ſorts of them, of which the moſt remarkable is the *rattle-ſnake*, having four or five round bones, at the end of the tail, which make a kind of noiſe by rubbing againſt one another, ſimilar to the noiſe of a child's rattle. The Indian women pound this rattle and ſwallow it when they are going to lye-in, becauſe they pretend that they can by its aſſiſtance bring forth without pain. The fat of the rattle-ſnake makes an

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mals in general and ſquirrels in particular have; another method to account for this pretended faſcination, ſee in *Kalm*'s *Travels* I. p. 319. note. F

an excellent unguent for the rheumatic pains; this unguent penetrates into the body, to the very bones.

It is generally believed that the number of *vertebræ* in the rattle encreaſes with the age of the ſnake; I have ſeen ſome rattle-ſnakes ſo big, as to be able to eat a whole roe-deer, by ſucking it little by little.

There is another kind of ſerpent, which they call the whipper, *fouetteur*; it is red on the belly and black on the back; it is ſometimes about twenty feet long, and when it finds any body in the water, it twines round him ſo violently as to take away his breath, and drown him.*

That ſnake which is called the *whiſtler* is about two feet long, but is ſo much more dangerous, becauſe it is not ſo eaſily ſeen, being very little; ſo that the Indians and negroes often tread upon and are bitten by it: it has a prodigious wide mouth and when angry, it whiſtles at a terrible rate,

* This ſnake is repreſented by *Cateſby nat. hiſt. of Carol.* II. 46. It might be called *coluber erythrogaſter*, for Cateſby calls it the *copper-bellied-ſnake*. The circumſtance here mentioned, relative to its twiſting round people in the water, and its enormous ſize are both new. F.

rate, and therefore the Indians call him *ho-huy*, that is, *whiſtler*. During my voyage to *Tombekbé*, a whiſtler hidden under the leaves, bit a ſoldier of my detachment, who trod upon its tail; the ſoldier was barefoot, and the ſnake was ſo angry that it got hold of his big toe and would not let go its hold. I was very uneaſy and ſorry to ſee this ſoldier expoſed to periſh he being my interpreter; I applied to an Indian doctor who accidentally went by the place, where we were. He took a powder out of a little ſack, and blew it through a tube upon the ſnake's head, which died inſtantly; he put another powder upon the wound, which prevented the poiſon from taking its effect; he likewiſe gave ſome of it in water to the patient, who was quite well after. I recompenſed this juggler very handſomely; I wiſhed likewiſe to know his ſecret, but he would not teach it me, and acted like a quack telling me haughtily that the maſter of life had communicated it to him alone.*

The

* It is highly probable that this powder, was of the root or whole plant of the *ariſtolochia anguicida* a Mexican plant, which probably grows likewiſe in *Louiſiana*, and according to Dr. *Jacquin* is an infallible remedy againſt the ſnakes, for theſe animals are actually faſcinated and even killed by it. In Car-

There are very large and long *crocodiles* or *alligators* in ſome parts of the river *Miſſiſippi*; they are ſo carnivorous, that if they find a man aſleep on the land, they carry him into the water and devour him, though they are elſe very cowardly, and run off as ſoon as one walks towards them; it ſeldom happens that they eat a man, becauſe it is ſo eaſy to eſcape from them; they purſue thoſe that fly from them, and are very formidable in the water. The alligator is the moſt horrid animal in nature and I cannot without horror remember that which had almoſt carried me into the river of *Tombekbé*; I thought I ſaw the devil juſt come out of hell, and I believe he could not be better repreſented than under that hideous form; its back is covered with impenetrable

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Carthagena the Indians chew the root of this *Ariſtolochia*, and mix its juice with the ſaliva; if one drop of this mixture is put into the ſnake's mouth, it inebriates it, and you may handle the ſnake as you pleaſe; if two or three drops are forced in; and they reach the ſnake's ſtomach, convulſions immediatly enſue, and the reptile dies. The Indian who ſhewed Dr. Jacquin this method, likewiſe informed him that he had been thrice bit by ſnakes, and had always cured the wound by uſing the *Ariſtolochia* both internally and externally. The plant itſelf has ſo nauſeous a ſmell, that it is always avoided by ſnakes, and cauſes, when chewed, vomiting even to men. See Jacquin's Hiſt. Select. Stirp. American. p. 232. t. 144. F.

ble ſcales, almoſt as ſtrong as oyſter-ſhells, reſiſting the force of a ball from a muſket. It is difficult to hurt an alligator any where except in the eye. They are numerous in the *red river*: they are torpid during the cold weather, and lie in the mud* with their mouths open, into which the fiſh enter as into a funnel, and can neither advance nor go back. The Indians then get upon their backs and kill them by ſtriking their heads with hatchets, and this is a kind of diverſion for them.

Here are likewiſe frogs of an extraordinary ſize, whoſe croaking exceeds the roaring of a bull. On my voyage from Mobile to New Orleans, I touched at the Horn Iſland and found a ſhell fiſh there, which the Indians call *Naninatelé*, which means *Sea Spider*; it was petrified. Its outward covering conſiſted of a more ſhining varniſh than the Chineſe; its eyes were petrified and hard as diamonds. This ſhell fiſh is of the ſize

* This circumſtance of the allegator's being torpid during winter, is quite new, and very remarkable for natural hiſtorians. It ſeems almoſt all the claſs of animals called *amphibia* by Dr. *Linnæus*, when found in cold climates, grow torpid during winter. F.

ſize and figure of a barber's baſon turned upſide down, and has a very ſharp tail about ten inches long, and they ſay it is dangerous to be ſtung by it *.

The higher parts of *Louiſiana* contain beavers and others; the Indians ſay that theſe beavers have been expelled by their brethren from *Canada*, becauſe they were too lazy to join with them in conſtructing the habitations which thoſe animals make in common, and the dikes, to alter the bed of rivers, all which they contrive and execute with great art and induſtry.

The *Karancro*, a bird of prey, is of the ſhape and ſize of a turkey †, and the moſt voracious bird

* This ſhell-fiſh is now in the Marquis *de Marigny's* cabinet of Natural Curioſities.

This *rare* animal is nothing elſe than the king's crab, common in the ſeas all round *America* and the *Weſt-Indies*; *monoculus Polyphemus*. Linn. Theſe animals are employed in New-York to feed pigs with, and the ingenious gentleman, who communicated this remark, adds, ſometimes it is eaten even by the two legged pigs. F.

† Hence it is called *Turkey Buzzard* by Cateſby, Carol. I. t. 6.----It is the *Carrion Vulture*, Forſter's N. Amer. Animals, p. 8. and *Vultur Aura*, Linn.

bird that ever was known; it follows the hunters and likewiſe the convoys that travel to their different ſtations. They wait in flights, like ravens, for the decampment; and then they come and eat greedily all that has been left there, after which they go on, towards the new camp. They eat dead corpſes; their feathers are black, and the ſoft downy feathers under the wings, have the quality of ſtopping the blood.

The *Flamingo* is of the ſame ſize, the end of its wings is black, the back white, and the belly flame-coloured *.

There are ſtares of two kinds; the leaſt are of the ſize of the European ones: they are ſo common that a hundred of them are often killed at one ſhot; they are very good to eat but the inhabitants are obliged to guard their crops of maize and rice, which otherwiſe would be entirely eaten up by theſe birds; they are as black as jet, and have the tip of the wing of a fine bright red; their feathers are very fine, and the ladies

* Flamingo, *Phœnicopterus ruber*. Linn.

wear muffs, and linings to their dreſſes of them *.

Here are parrots and parrokeets, and fine jays in great abundance: in the country of the *Miſſouris* there are magpies, only different from the European ones by their plumage, their black and white colours being ſhaded; the Indians make ornaments for their hair of them.

The eyes are taken with the beauty of nature unaſſiſted by art; here ſhe appears as ſhe came from the hands of the Creator, before the fall of man. The ear of the traveller is enchanted by the ſongs of the birds, and eſpecially thoſe of the *mocking* birds, which are fond of being in his company, and ſeem formed on purpoſe to make him forget the fatigues and tedioufneſs of the journey. Indeed as ſoon as the mocking bird perceives a man, he perches near him, and ſings very agreeably, flying from place to place; and in a word, this bird is inimitable; it ſettles at the top of a tree, and mocks or mimics all the

* Theſe are the *red-winged ſtares* or *maize thieves* mentioned and drawn in *Kalm's Travels*, Vol. II. p. 74. *Oriolus phœniceus*. Linn.

the other birds; he likewiſe imitates the mewing of a cat. The mocking bird ſometimes comes to the towns and houſes, and appears enchanted and pleaſed when one plays on any inſtrument and even joins the concert; it is of the ſize of a ſtare, and of a bluiſh grey colour: it is eaſily tamed, if taken young *.

The *Pope* is of a bright blue round the head; on the throat it is of a fine red, and on the back of a gold green colour, it ſings very finely and is of the ſize of a canary bird †.

The *Cardinal bird* is quite red, having the throat black, and a creſt of feathers on its head, its bill is ſtrong and red; it is a kind of ſparrow, which is very fond of men, and comes to the ſize of a lark, but whiſtles during ſummer like a black-bird ‡.

* Mocking bird, *Turdus Orpheus* Linn. Kalm's Travels, Vol. II. p. 90. F.

† *Pope* is the male of the *Emberiza Ciris* Linn. known by the name of painted Finch. F.

‡ Cardinal bird is the *Loxia Cardinalis*, Linn. F.

The *Biſhop* is blue mixed with purple and of the ſize of a linnet *.

The gold-finch is quite yellow, with the tips of the wings black †.

There is a bird they call the *Harlequin*, becauſe it is varied with many colours, and another called the *Swiſs*, becauſe it is red and blue; the laſt three ſpecies only come to the *Illinois* in ſummer.

The *humming bird* is no bigger than a large beetle, and painted with many bright and changing colours; it lives upon the ſweet juice of flowers as bees do; its neſt is made of a very fine cotton or woolly ſubſtance, and ſuſpended on the branch of a tree ‡. There are numberleſs unknown birds, which would make the account too long.

I have ſeen butterflies of great beauty; I found two on my voyages (that have been eaten up

* Biſhop, *Tanagra Epiſcopus* Linn.

† Goldfinch, *Fringilla triſtis*, Linn.

‡ Humming bird, *Trochilus Colubris*, Linn.

up by worms) the like of which I never ſaw; I never beheld any thing more magnificent! it ſeemed as if the author of nature had been pleaſed to throw upon their wings the fineſt and moſt vivid colours; the fineſt and pureſt gold appeared mixed among the other colours with admirable ſymmetry.

Theſe butterflies were probably carried to the *Akanzas* by a ſudden ſtorm, for in the whole ſpace of a thouſand leagues which I have gone through, I have never found their equals. I deſired ſome Indians, of the *Oſages* nation, who live near the mines of *St. Barbe*, to bring me ſome of theſe butterflies: they anſwered, that in the country where they were to be found, the inhabitants were very ferocious, and had merely the forms of men.

Here are various ſorts of ducks, but the moſt curious are thoſe which perch on trees, having pretty ſtrong claws at the end of their palmated toes; they build their neſts upon thoſe trees which lean over rivers or lakes, and when their young ones are hatched, they go into the water immediately. As to their feathers, they are ſhaded with the fineſt colours: the male has a creſt upon its head. Theſe ducks are the beſt

to eat, they feed in the woods on acorns and beech ſeeds *.

On the banks of rivers there are birds called *Egrets*, they are exceeding white and the ladies employ their feathers as *aigrettes* †.

The *Pelican*, which the inhabitants of the country call great throat, on account of a pouch he has under his throat, is as white and as large as a ſwan, its bill is about twelve inches long; they make muffs of its ſkin, and precipitate the paſte of indigo with its fat. This paſte is made from a plant, the grain of which comes from the Eaſt Indies, for dying blue ‡.

The ſpoon-bill §, having a bill like a *Spatula*, an apothecary's inſtrument ſo called. There is likewiſe a bird called *Lancet-bill*, whoſe beak is actually

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* This is the *Anas arborea*, Linn.

† Egrets, *Ardea alba?* Linn. the great white heron? Forſt. North. Am. Animals, p. 14.

‡ Pelican, *Pelecanus Onocrotalus*, β. Linn.

§ Spoon-bill, *Platalea Leucorodia*, Linn.

actually like a lancet. It is impoſſible to finiſh this matter, it would require whole volumes; I leave this detail to our learned countrymen, M. *de Buffon* and *Daubenton*, who have undertaken this vaſt work. I wiſh you may be content with this ſhort account.

I am, SIR, &c.

At New Orleans the 1ſt of June, 1762.

P. S. Before I conclude my letter I ſhall ſpeak to you of two precious plants in Louiſiana; which are the *Indigo* and the *Cotton*.

Indigo is a plant reſembling the *Broom* or *Geniſta* very much. A kind of it is growing in Louiſiana ſpontaneouſly, and commonly upon hills and near woods. That which is cultivated is brought from the Weſt India iſles. There are two crops of it every year. It grows to the height of two feet and a half. When it is ripe, it is cut, and brought into the place where it is to rot; this is a building twenty feet high, without walls; but only ſupported by poſts. In it they make three troughs, one above another

other, the loweſt is made ſo, that the water it contains, may run out of it, and out of the building. The ſecond ſtands on the edge of this, ſo that the water it contains falls into the firſt, and the third is diſpoſed in the ſame manner with regard to the ſecond. The indigo leaves are put into the uppermoſt trough; with a certain quantity of water, and muſt putrify in it. The man who is at the head of the manufacture examines the indigo from time to time, and when he ſees it is time to empty this trough, he turns the cock, and the water runs into the ſecond trough; there is a proper time which muſt be well obſerved for doing this operation, for if the plant remains too long in this putrefying place, the Indigo becomes black.

As ſoon as the water is in the ſecond trough, it is beaten till the overſeer thinks it ſufficient; it is uſe and habit by which one learns to ſeize upon the true moment. When the water has been well beaten, it is left to ſettle: the indigo forms a kind of ſediment at the bottom of the trough; the water above it muſt have time to become clear, and is afterwards drawn off by means of ſeveral cocks placed above each other.

The

The indigo is then taken off likewiſe, and put into ſacks made of common ſackcloth, where the remaining water may run off. After this it is ſpread upon boards, and when dry it is cut into little ſquare pieces, put into barrels, and ſo ſent to *Europe*.

In order to have ſeeds, it is neceſſary only to let ſo many plants grow up as are wanted; it grows more or leſs tall according to the nature of the ſoil, which ought to be light; in the Weſt India iſlands they have four crops a-year, on account of the great heat, but in *Louiſiana* they cannot have above three; the indigo in the latter place is likewiſe not ſo good *.

The cotton-ſhrub is no bigger than a roſe-buſh, but ſpreads more. It does not ſucceed ſo well in ſtrong or rich grounds as in others; therefore that which grows in Lower *Louiſiana* is inferior in goodneſs to that which is cultivated in the higher parts of that province.

The

* The indigo plant is, with Dr. *Linnæus*, the *Indigofera tinctoria*, and the indigo mentioned to grow ſpontaneouſly in *Louiſiana* is the *Sophora tinctoria*, Linn.; which, with a proper management, is ſaid to afford as good indigo as the celebrated *Anil* of the Indies and Egypt. F.

The cotton of this country is of the ſpecies called white cotton of Siam. It is neither ſo fine nor ſo long as the ſilky cotton, but it is however very white and very fine. Its leaves are of a lively green, and reſemble ſpinage very much; the flower is of a pale yellow, the ſeed contained in the capſule is black, and oval like a kidney-bean: it is commonly planted in ſuch grounds as are not yet fit for tobacco or for indigo; for the latter requires the greateſt care.

The ſhrub is cut down to the ground every two or three years, becauſe they ſay it bears more after it. The piſtil of the flower changes into an acuminated capſule, of the ſize of a pigeon's egg, green at firſt, then brown, and at laſt almoſt black, dry and brittle.

When the cotton is ripe, the heat of the ſun makes it expand; the capſule that contained it opens in three or four places with a little noiſe. Then it muſt be gathered quickly, leſt it ſhould be loſt. Each capſule contains five, ſix, or ſeven ſeeds, of the ſize of peaſe; the cotton ſticks to them, and it is therefore difficult to get the ſeeds out, except in time and with patience; for this

this reaſon, however, many planters have been diſguſted with the culture of cotton *.

I have not mentioned tobacco to you; it is likely that it is a native of the country, becauſe the tradition of the Indians, or their *ancient word*, tells us, that they have always employed it to ſmoke in their calumets of peace. I ſhall conclude with an obſervation that has already been made, and which it is good to repeat, till ſomebody tries the experiment. The climate of *Louiſiana*, and the hilly parts of that country, give reaſon to believe, that it would not be difficult to plant ſaffron there; the coloniſts would reap great advantages from it, and the neighbourhood of *Mexico* would procure them a quick and certainly an uſeful conſumption.

* The people in the Engliſh colonies, and in China, employ an inſtrument which ſeparates the pods from the cotton with great eaſe. F.

LETTER XXI.

To the same.

Reflections on the Population of America; *that Continent has not been unknown to the Ancients; it seems that it is connected with* Asia *on the Side of* Tartary, *from whence the People that first settled it must naturally be supposed to have come. A Digression upon the Way of preserving one's Health in* America.

SIR,

I Expect to set out for *France* very soon; and I take advantage of an opportunity that offers to write to you, before I leave this part of the world. After giving you an idea of the manners, customs, and of the history of the people with whom I have been during my voyages, I do not believe I could better conclude my narrative, than by some reflections

tions on the population of this immenſe continent; but this matter is ſo obſcure, that we cannot now flatter ourſelves to clear it up: many learned writers have already attempted to throw light upon it, but they have not ſucceeded; modern philoſophy has endeavoured, with as little ſucceſs, to draw advantages from it, and its reaſonings and opinions have not even been able to ſeduce weak geniuſes.

By reflecting attentively upon the old writers, every thing ſeems to convince us, that *America* was not entirely unknown to them. *Diodorus Siculus* ſeems to have ſpoken of it with preciſion enough: Father *Laffiteau* quotes a paſſage from that hiſtorian, and adds his reflections to clear it up. The *Phœnicians*, if we may believe the Greek author, after ſending ſeveral colonies upon the coaſt of the Mediterranean, being enriched by their trade, did not go far beyond the columns of Hercules; that vaſt and unknown ocean, which they diſcovered on coming through the ſtreights of *Gibraltar*, inſpired them with a kind of horror, which they ſurmounted only by degrees: ſome bold navigators ventured out upon the ocean afterwards; but ſailing along the coaſt of *Africa*, a violent tempeſt, of ſeveral days duration, carried them to an iſle of very great

great extent, at a great distance to the westward. At their return they were very ready to speak of their discovery, they embellished their accounts, with all the fictions familiar to travellers of all countries, and at all times. When the *Tyrrhenians* became the masters of the sea, they were willing to make a settlement there; but the *Carthagenians* opposed it, fearing that their countrymen, attracted by what was said of this land, should leave their country in order to settle there; they likewise considered this new-discovered country as a last resource for themselves, in case some disaster should have overturned their empire.

To this passage of *Diodorus Siculus*, Father *Lafiteau* adds one of *Pausanias*. This writer was inquiring, whether there were any satyrs; one *Euphemus*, who was born in *Caria*, told him, that, in a voyage of his, he had been carried by a storm to the extremities of the ocean, where he had seen several isles, which the sailors called *Satyrides*. The people that inhabited them were of a red colour, and had tails; the sailors trembled, and endeavoured to avoid them; but the contrary winds forced them to come near the shore; the savages invested the vessel, and the crew,

crew, in order to get rid of them, were obliged to deliver a woman to them.

Father *Laffiteau*'s reflection will appear very juſt to you. "The deſcription of theſe iſland-"ers," ſays he, "perfectly fits to the *Caraïbes*, "who were maſters of the Antilles, commonly "called the *Caribee* iſlands, out of moſt of "which they have been expelled by the Euro-"peans in theſe latter times. The complexion "of theſe people is very red, and it is naturally "ſo; it being leſs the effect of the climate, "than of the imagination of the mothers, who, "finding the red colour beautiful, tranſmit it "to their children *; their fleſh is likewiſe arti-"ficially red, for they paint themſelves every "day with *rocou*, which ſerves inſtead of vermi-"lion to them, and appear as red as blood by "it. As to what concerns the imagination of "the ſailors, who thought they beheld ſatyrs, "it only was the effect of fear, that made them "take

* Every one will not agree with the Jeſuit upon the effect of the mother's imagination on their children: the different colours of men from the ſeveral parts of the world, offer many more difficulties. All that has been written on the ſubject has not explained this phenomenon; men who were originally white, muſt have become black, red, and brown, (bronzed), by the union of ſeveral cauſes.

"take falſe tails for real ones; almoſt all the "barbarous nations of *America* wore this orna- "ment, eſpecially when they went to war."

The ſimilarity which has been obſerved to exiſt between the manners of ſeveral *American* nations, and thoſe of ſome of the oldeſt nations on our continent, ſeems to demonſtrate that this country was not unknown in ancient times, and chiefly proves that the known or old parts furniſhed the new one with men; how could that ſimilarity be explained, if this had not happened? How great a reſemblance is there in the religion, manners, and cuſtoms of the *Indians*, with thoſe of ſome ancient nations. Theſe details will always deſtroy moſt of the bold ſyſtems which have been ſtarted on the population of *America*. If they were a colony of people eſcaped from the deluge, the univerſality of which is in vain conteſted, they would have brought anti-diluvian cuſtoms into America. Thoſe nations that were born after this dreadful puniſhment, do they reſemble their anceſtors that were buried under the floods? We have not yet light enough upon this ſubject to make a juſt compariſon; we can anſwer nothing to thoſe who ſay, *That the Almighty hand, which ſowed plants and fruits in all parts of the world, could likewiſe place*

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men there. An ingenious phraſe is not always a reaſon: no one diſputes this power of the Creator; but he has been pleaſed to teach us himſelf, that it was not his will to people the world ſo, and that he gave exiſtence to two creatures, who were the origin of the whole human race.

All theſe opinions reſt upon the courſe that men muſt have taken, in order to come from the old world to the new; and it is upon this difficulty that moſt authors found their writings. A more exact and extenſive knowledge of our globe would annihilate all theſe difficulties. It is very probable, that there is a paſſage which unites *Aſia* to *America*; I have already ſaid ſomething of it to you, in ſpeaking of the elephants bones found in one of the countries I have gone through: this is not a new opinion; this conjecture has been made long ago. "*America*," ſays Father *Laffiteau*, "can be come at "in different places, and accordingly it may "have been peopled from all ſides; this is be"yond a doubt; it is but at a little diſtance "from the ſouthern unknown countries; and "in the north, *Greenland*, which is *perhaps* con"tiguous to this new continent, is not far from "*Lapland*. Thoſe parts of *Aſia* which bound it "towards the land of *Yeſo*, probably make but

" one continent with, or are only at a little di-
" ſtance from *America*, if the ſtreights that are
" ſuppoſed to be there go to the Tatarian ſea:
" the ocean which ſurrounds *America* almoſt en-
" tirely, is ſtrewed with iſles, both in the nor-
" thern and ſouthern ſeas. Men may have gone
" from iſle to iſle, either by ſhipwreck or by
" mere chance."

This author alledges many reaſons to prove, that *North America* joins to *Tartary*, or to ſome country contiguous to it; the following is a very ſingular one: You know that *ginſeng* is originally a native of the *Mantcheoux Tartary*, the *Chineſe* or *Tartarian* name of it ſignifies, the *thighs of a man*. The *Americans*, who were long acquainted with it, and made uſe of it, called it *garel-oguen*, which has the ſame ſignification. If *America* did not join to *Tartary*, or if the latter had not peopled the firſt, how could their reſpective inhabitants give names of the ſame ſignification to the ſame plant? I do not ſpeak here of etymologies of words that have been corrupted, and which are only found by forcing them; their ſignification is here in queſtion.

Captain *William Rogers* looks upon it as very probable, that ſome *Tartarians* paſſed over into *America*:

America: he obſerves, that the ſhips which annually go from the *Philippines* to *Mexico*, are obliged to ſteer to the northward, in order to meet with favourable winds, thoſe which riſe between the tropics being always contrary to them. He adds, that after paſſing forty-two degrees of north latitude, ſailors often meet with ſands and ſhallows, which ſeem to indicate that they are near ſome coaſts. He imagines, that theſe coaſts might well be ſome continent unknown to *Europeans*, and uniting *California* with *Japan*; but ſhould they not rather be the coaſts of *Kamtchatka*, or of that new country to the eaſt diſcovered by Captain *Bering?*

To theſe obſervations I ſhall add an abſtract of a relation, publiſhed in the *Mercure Galant* for November 1711. I ſhall quote the fact, without making any reflections to confirm or contradict it; the author pretends to have got it out of a manuſcript found in *Canada*.

Ten men reſolved to go out upon diſcoveries, with a view to get riches; they embarked in three canoes, and went up the river *Miſſiſippi*. After a long voyage, they found another river which flowed to the ſouth-ſouth-weſt; they carried their canoes to it, and continued their na-

vigation; ſome time after, they arrived in a country which extended two hundred leagues, and was inhabited by a nation who called themſelves *Eſcaaniba*.

The Frenchmen (for the ten travellers were of that nation) found much gold with theſe people. Their king pretended to deduce his origin from *Montezuma*; his name was *Agauzan*, and he kept a ſtanding army of an hundred thouſand men in time of peace. The *Eſcaaniba* women were white as the *European* women; they and the men of that nation had long ears, to which they faſtened gold rings. One of their diſtinctions was, to let their nails grow: polygamy was permitted among them; they did not pay any attention to their daughters, who lived in the greateſt liberty, without any one to watch over their conduct. Their country produced tobacco, various fruits, ſome common to *Europe* and *India*, and ſome that were peculiar to it; the rivers abounded with fiſh; their foreſts were full of game of every kind, and contained above all a great number of parrots. The capital was ſituated at ſix leagues from the river, which they called *Miſſi*, *Golden river*. They valued gold ſo little, that they permitted the *French* to take as much as they pleaſed with them: you may

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conceive, that they made a good uſe of this permiſſion; each of them took for his ſhare two hundred and forty pounds weight of gold. Their mines were in the mountains, from whence they brought the gold upon rivulets, which were dry during one ſeaſon of the year.

Theſe people traded with a nation very diſtant from them; and in order to make the *French* ſenſible of it, they told them, that it required ſix months to make the voyage. The adventurers happened to be with the *Eſcaanibas* at the time when their caravan ſet out to trade with thoſe ſtrangers; it conſiſted of three hundred oxen loaded with gold; an equal number of men, armed with lances, bows, arrows, and a kind of daggers, conducted and watched them: they brought back, in exchange for their gold, ſome iron, ſteel, lances, and other weapons.

I cannot aſcertain in what degree we may truſt this account; the adventurers conjectured, that the diſtant country whither the *Eſcaanibas* went, was *Japan*; in that caſe, there muſt be a communication between *Aſia* and *America*; ſome Engliſh writers, without attempting to diſpute the authenticity of this account, believe, that the ſavages went to trade with the inhabitants of

Kamptchatka, or of ſome iſle or continent near that peninſula. This communication will never be well aſcertained whilſt it remains undiſcovered *. Conjectures explain nothing; they give probabilities, but go no further: however, be it as it will, it is very probable that ſuch a communication exiſts: ſuppoſing there are ſtreights that divide theſe two great parts of the world, they cannot have prevented men from penetrating out of one into the other, by croſſing thoſe ſtreights. We muſt hope, that the ignorance in which we are at preſent will not laſt for ever; the diſcoveries which men ſhall endeavour to make in the great ſouthern or Pacific ocean, will give us more light on this ſubject †. If, after making

* The modern geographical diſcoveries, and eſpecially thoſe made by the Ruſſians, ſufficiently evince, that the ſea entirely divides *Aſia* from *America*; there can be no doubt neither of *Japan*'s being an iſle, and unconnected with the continent of *America*; it is true, however, that the ſea which divides *Aſia* from *America* near Cape *Tchukſhi*, is very narrow, and not a ſufficient obſtacle to the migration of the nations that inhabit the north-eaſt parts of *Siberia* into *America*; for a further hint concerning the population of that vaſt continent, ſee *Kalm's Travels to North America*, vol. iii. p. 125. &c. F.

† When theſe letters were gone to preſs, I heard that the Engliſh had diſcovered ten iſlands in that ocean. There is an

making voyages that way, ſome ſtreights be really found, it is no reaſon why they ſhould always have been there: earthquakes may have divided the iſthmus or neck of land which combined the two continents; many authors attribute the ſtreights of *Gibraltar* to the ſame kind of event: the Mediterranean, they ſay, had formerly no communication with the Atlantic; many pretend, that *Great Britain* was joined to *France*; now the ſea ſeparates *Dover* and *Calais*: why cannot this be the caſe with *Aſia* and *America* likewiſe?

The time in which the population of *America* was commenced, is as obſcure and indeterminate as the manner in which it was peopled; every thing which is difficult to penetrate excites the curioſity of men; they wiſh to ſee ſomething new, and to ſpeak of it, and frequently they

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an account of it in the voyage of Commodore *Byron*, who has been ſo much talked of, and has proved the exiſtence of giants, which was blindly believed by the ancients, rejected as chimerical by the moderns, and now confirmed by new diſcoveries. The next voyage which the Engliſh will make that way, will furniſh us with more minute accounts; others will be encouraged to imitate them, and a perfect knowledge of the South Sea will clear up the difficulties concerning the junction of *Aſia* and *America*.

give us their own chimerical imaginations as ſomething real. Among the ſingular opinions which this ſubject has given riſe to, I ſhall mention that of *Marc Leſcarbot*, in his Hiſtory of *New France*; Father *Laffiteau* ſhall ſtill be my guide on this occaſion, and from his work on the manners of the ſavage *Americans*, I ſhall take what I have to ſay on this matter. "*Leſ-*
"*carbot* has not ſcrupled to advance very poſi-
"tively, and in a manner that goes beyond con-
"jecture, that *Noah* was not unacquainted with
"the weſtern continent, (where *Leſcarbot* was
"born); and that at leaſt he knew it by fame.
"That, having lived three hundred and fifty
"years after the deluge, he himſelf had taken
"care to people, or rather to re-people that
"country: that, being a good workman, and
"an excellent pilot, and being charged to re-
"pair the deſolation of the earth, he may be
"ſuppoſed to have conducted his children thi-
"ther; and it may have been as eaſy to him to
"have gone through the ſtreights of *Gibraltar* to
"*New France*, *Cape Verd*, and *Brazil*, as it was
"to his children to go and ſettle in *Japan*, or
"as it was to himſelf to come from the moun-
"tains of *Armenia* into *Italy*, where he founded
"the *Janiculum* upon the banks of the *Tiber*, if

"we

"we may credit the accounts given by profane "writers."

I doubt whether it is neceſſary to go back to *Noah*, to find the period of the population of *America*; if, as is very probable, the *Tartars* went over into that continent, it muſt have happened in the following times: a ſet of people, who are not numerous, do not eaſily leave the vaſt country they inhabit; they do not ſo ſoon endeavour to ſeparate from each other; they continue together, till, by having multiplied too much, they ſpread more, or till ſome other circumſtances force them to leave their native country: ſuch reſearches are of little importance; they are mere matters of curioſity, and the difficulty of ſatifying that ought to prevent men from employing their time in them. All that can be aſſerted with certainty is, that *America* ſeems to have been inhabited only of late.

Powell, an Engliſh writer, mentions, in his Hiſtory of *Wales*, that, in the year 1170, there was a war in that country for the ſucceſſion to the throne, after the death of Prince *Owen Gwinneth*. A baſtard took the crown from the legitimate children; one of the latter, whoſe name was *Madoc*, embarked in order to make new diſcoveries;

coveries; directing his courſe to the weſtward, he came to a country the fertility and beauty of which were amazing. As this country, was without inhabitants, *Madoc* ſettled in it; *Hakluit* aſſures us, that he made two or three voyages to *England* to fetch inhabitants, who, upon the account he gave them of that fine country, went to ſettle with him.

The Engliſh believe, that this prince diſcovered *Virginia*. *Peter Martyr* ſeems to give a proof of it, when he ſays, that the nations of *Virginia*, and thoſe of *Guatimala*, celebrate the memory of one of their ancient heroes, whom they call *Madoc*. Several modern travellers have found ancient Britiſh words uſed by the *North American* nations. The celebrated Engliſh Biſhop *Nicholſon* believes, that the Welch language has formed a conſiderable part of the languages of the *American* nations; there are antiquaries who pretend, that the Spaniards got their double or guttural *l (ll)* from the *Americans*, who, according to the Engliſh, muſt have got it from the *Welch*. I ſhould never have done, if I were to mention all their reaſonings to prove the voyage of the *Welch* Prince *Madoc*. The Dutch brought a bird, with a white head, from the ſtreights of *Magellan*, which the natives called *Penguin*;

Penguin; this word is an old Welch one, and ſignifies *white head*; from hence they conclude, that the natives originall came from *Wales* *.

The *Engliſh* are not the only people, who, according to our hiſtorical romances, went to *America* and ſettled there: *Bayer* pretends, that the *Normans* were the firſt Europeans who ventured to ſail to that country.

Doctor *Lochner* aſſerts that a *Bohemian* of a diſtinguiſhed family went to *Braſil*, and diſcovered the ſtraights of *Magellan*, before *Columbus* went to the New World; this Bohemian was called *Martin* †. Many German writers who ſeem

* This, however, is a wrong ſuppoſition; for it appears, that the bird in queſtion has a black and not a white head; but its name is Spaniſh, and ſignifies a fat bird, the *Penguin* or rather *Pinguin* being very fat. F.

† Our author miſtakes the name of this man for that of his country: he was called *Martin Behaim*, a native of *Nurenberg* in Germany; his father was a noble ſenator of that city: after ſtudying mathematics, and eſpecially aſtronomy and geography, under the great mathematician *Joannes Regiomontanus*, he went to the *Netherlands*, then governed by the Princeſs *Iſabella*, daughter to *John* I. of Portugal; he there obtained the command of a ſhip, fitted out for the purpoſe of making diſcoveries: he ſet ſail in 1460, and, ſailing

ſeem to wiſh that America ſhould bear his name preferably to that of *Americo Veſpucci*, have followed this opinion.

Whether theſe traditions are adopted or rejected, whether they are fabulous or true, it remains inconteſtible that the *Americans* have the ſame origin with us; among all their errors, they have preſerved ſome ideas that have a great ſimilarity with thoſe, which have been tranſmitted to us by writing: I ſhall mention to you a piece of an Engliſh diſſertation on the population of *America*,

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ſailing to the weſtward firſt met with the iſle of *Fayal* one of the *Azores*, all which iſlands were afterwards called the *Flemiſh* iſles from the firſt inhabitants, which *Martin Behaim* brought thither. He then returned, and obtained two ſhips, with which he cruized in the atlantic for ſome time, and at laſt diſcovered the fourth part of the world, and even went as far as the ſtraights, now called *Straights of Magellan*; he laid down all his diſcoveries in a ſea chart, which he preſented to king *Alphonſus* the fifth, of *Portugal*. This ſketch afterwards fell into the hands of *Chriſtopher Columbus*, a *Genoeſe* who was at *Lisbon*, and firſt inſpired him with a deſire of viſiting thoſe unknown countries. When he undertook the voyage, he always followed the ſame courſe which *Martin Behaim* had laid down on his chart, and performed the voyage in as ſhort a time as is done now. In the noble family of *Behaim* at Nuremberg, they ſtill preſerve among other curioſities a globe drawn with a pen, and coloured by that able navigator, in which all his diſcoveries are marked. F.

America, in which many *American* opinions are collected, which owe their origin to the truths preserved by *Moses*. "The *Peruvians* believe, "that there formerly was a deluge, by which "all the inhabitants of their continent perished, "a few excepted, who retired into caverns at "the top of the highest mountains, and whose "descendants filled the earth with inhabitants "again. Some ideas, little different from "these have been received by the natives of "*Hispaniola*, according to what *Gemelli Carreri* "relates. The old histories of *Mexico* likewise "mention an universal deluge, by which all "men, one man and woman excepted, perished. "These two people, according to the *Mexicans*, "had numerous descendants; but all their chil-"dren were dumb, till a pigeon endowed them "with the power of speech; they add, that the "primitive language of the immediate de-"scendants of the couple who survived the de-"luge, was split into so many dialects, that it "was impossible for them to understand each "other; which after obliging them to separate, "contributed to make them people the different "countries of the earth. Some *American* na-"tions have a tradition, that all men derive "their origin from four women, which agrees "pretty well with the *Mosaic* history, which

"makes

" makes all the nations deſcend from *Noah* and " his three ſons. All theſe traditions manifeſtly " ſhew, that the *Americans* are deſcendants of " *Noah*, and that various accounts of the *Mo-* " *ſaic* hiſtory are even come down to them. " This is ſufficient to overthrow the ſtrange ſyſ- " tem which attributes anceſtors to the *Americans* " anterior to *Adam*."

Does not this quotation anſwer all the arguments of thoſe ſyſtematic writers, who will give us the fruits of their abſurd imagination as truths? Where could the *Americans* get theſe notions, if they were not all poſterior to the deluge, and deſcended from nations that had preſerved the tradition? It is eaſy to explain, that by length of time, by the ignorance and the mutability of the *Indians*, they have immerſed true facts, which were committed to their memory, in fables. The want of monuments, characters or letters to write down thoſe events, certainly impairs the purity of tradition; as ſoon as it is tranſmitted by word of mouth from father to ſon, it muſt be much changed after paſſing through ſo many generations.

The wars which the *Indians* ever carried on among themſelves, have contributed greatly to hinder

hinder population; their ſmall number has certainly been the cauſe of the nomadic life they lead; they ran through the woods in order to ſearch for game, and ſettled in all the places where they found food in abundance, leaving them again in order to go further, whenever it began to fail them.

If they were more numerous their wants would increaſe; it would become more difficult to provide food for them all; this difficulty would open their minds, give them new ideas: they would feel that it was neceſſary to provide a ſubſiſtence more independent from mere chance; the fruits which the earth produces, would teach them to multiply them by cultivation; they would ſee all the uſes of theſe productions, think of appropriating them to themſelves, and ſucceed in it; in ſome places we ſee them already cultivate maize, they would ſoon cultivate other corn; one kind of knowledge would lead to another: they would ſettle in the country which they had cultivated, and be no longer ſuch vagabonds as there are now.

The ſettlement of the *Europeans* in the northern parts has engaged many of theſe nations to come and ſettle in their neighbourhood in order

order to get that assistance from them which they want; the desire which the *Europeans* shew of possessing their furs and the ease with which they can obtain brandy and fire-arms in exchange for them, often excite them to go through the woods and hunt in the extent of two hundred leagues around, in order to get those things, which become real wants to them; thus they are only apparently fixed; they preserve their love for a rambling life, and the period of their civilization seems as yet very distant; perhaps they will destroy each other before they come to it.

This is all that can be asserted with probability on the population of *America*; my letter would be too long, if I would only mention a hundredth part of what has been said on this subject. The systems and contrary opinions which have been long published, would make considerable volumes; I have endeavoured to confine myself to curious observations; those who think the *Tartars* have chiefly furnished *America* with inhabitants, seem to have hit the true opinion; you cannot believe how great the resemblance of the *Indian* manners is to those of the ancient Scythians; it is found in their religious ceremonies, their customs and in their food,

food. *Hornius* is full of characteriſtics, that may ſatisfy your curioſity in this reſpect, and I deſire you to read him.

I ſhall now quit all theſe diſcuſſions which ought to finiſh the account of my voyages, and ſhall ſpeak of another ſubject, more uſeful to the human race, in regard to which obſervation and experience ſuffice to inſtruct us.

As it is the natural deſire of man to live long, I hope it will not be foreign to my purpoſe, to ſhew in a few words, how one may preſerve life and live long in *America*.

I ſhall therefore finiſh my letter by a ſmall diſſertation on the method of managing one's health. I remember to have read, in the *Holland Gazette* of the 3d of April 1687, that *Frederick Gualdus*, a noble Venetian, has preſerved his life to the age of four hundred years; it is pretended, that he was poſſeſſed of the univerſal medicine. He left *Venice* the 7th of March 1686; having his picture with him painted by *Titian*, who was then already dead an hundred and thirty years. I am ſure you will agree with me in ſaying, that exerciſe and ſobriety procure a perfect health. The nations of *America* knew

neither wine nor brandy two hundred and ſixty years ago, when the *Europeans* came to them; they lived, as I have already ſaid, on the fleſh of wild beaſts dried, roaſted, or boiled with maize pounded in a mortar made of ſome hard wood. This food is wholeſome, and makes a very good *chyle*. I have lived about two months upon theſe victuals, going up the river *Mobile* with the *Indians*, and can affirm, that I never enjoyed my health better in my life than at that time. Of all Latin proverbs, this is the beſt:

Plures gula occidit, quam gladius.

Voluptuouſneſs and intemperance in eating and drinking, deſtroy more men than the ſword. Therefore one ought to preſcribe to himſelf a proper regimen of life, eſpecially in the hot countries of *America*.

Firſt of all, great care muſt be taken to be accuſtomed to the climate by degrees, and to abſtain from eating all kinds of fruit, and drinking all ſorts of liquors, till the body is uſed to it. People who are very replete with blood, may be bled from time to time, to prevent an apoplexy. A gentle purge will ſometimes do well; the burning

burning heat of the ſun muſt be avoided, and the air at night likewiſe.

When one has drunk too much wine, it is neceſſary to take four things; ſuch as lemon, which is very common there; by this means you will neither find yourſelves ill, nor be overcome by the vapours which commonly follow. If the quantity of liquor which has been drank heats the body, ſome refreſhing aliments muſt be tataken, but every thing that increaſes heat muſt be avoided: ſpirituous liquors ſhould be drank as little as poſſible, for they burn the blood, and eaſily cauſe a hot fever.

When you have eaten too much, ſtrong liquors are good to ſtrengthen the ſtomach, and help digeſtion; but if, on the contrary, it happens that you are heated by drinking too much*, they would prove very dangerous. Thoſe who are too much addicted to debauchery are almoſt always tormented with bad dreams, which fatigue them ſo much as almoſt to trouble their

* It ought to be remarked, that, ſince the *Americans* have drank wine and brandy, they have like us ſhortened their days.

mind, becauſe the fumes of the wine, with which their body is filled, ſucceſſively excite their imagination. It is known by experience, that ſober perſons, and thoſe eſpecially who drink water, ſleep quietly, their ſleep being neither too ſlight nor too heavy. It appears, from the ſecond chapter of the Life of *Apollonius*, written by *Philoſtratus*, that at Athens thoſe who were afflicted with bad dreams applied to the prieſts of the falſe deities, in order to be rid of them; they ordered them to abſtain from wine for three or four days; this cleared their imagination, and produced a cure, which they attributed to their gods.

If, after taking too much food, you are heavy, and your members fatigued, ſo that too great an abundance of nutritive juice occaſions a plenitude in the whole body, and makes you tired; I believe that, in imitation of the *Indians*, ſweating is an infallible remedy, when the natural heat is aſſiſted with an exterior one; this remedy is infallible, provided it be applied at the firſt appearance of the diſtemper; the *Europeans*, in order to perſpire well, get between two blankets, and remain there covered up, the face excepted; they do not get up till they have

ſweated

ſweated well, and about an hour after the whole perſpiration is performed. If this method of ſweating is continued during ſome days, you find yourſelf ſo much eaſed, that your ſtrength and appetite return, and you are ſurpriſed to ſee yourſelf ſo light and ſo nimble; for by the perſpiration all the *viſcera* are perfectly cleared of all their ſuperfluities, without pain or any violence done to nature, which the ordinary medicines cannot do. In order to be healthy, this ought to be done thrice in the year, *viz.* in ſpring, autumn, and in winter.

My concluſion is, that diet, perſpiration, and ſweating compoſe an univerſal medicine.

Therefore I ſay, that nature ſhould direct us in all things; from her we muſt learn the true means of preſerving health, which ſhe orders us to do upon pain of the greateſt evils, and even of death. I have already told you, that the frequent exerciſes of the Indians of *North America*, ſuch as dancing, playing at ball, hunting, fiſhing, and fighting, increaſe their natural heat ſo much, that it drives all the ſuperfluities out of their bodies by perſpiration. Why do the peaſants

ſants live long, and are healthy, without the aſſiſtance of phyſicians! The perpetual labour they are employed in keeps them ſo; exerciſe prevents their knowing the gout, gravel, and other infirmities, to which the richer people in *Europe* are ſubject, on account of the refined taſte of their tables, and becauſe they make no more uſe of their legs than old infirm men. I have known ſome, who, like Moliere's *Malade imaginaire*, filled their ſtomach with as many drugs as an apothecary's ſhop.

It has been obſerved, in the hot countries of *America*, that the young *Europeans* die ſooner there than the old ones; becauſe the former imprudently eat all ſorts of fruit, which cauſe them a dyſentery; therefore it is neceſſary to eat very little of them, till the body is accuſtomed to the climate, after which, at the expiration of a year, this will cauſe no further inconveniencies.

By obſerving theſe precautions, I will warrant, that people will live longer in this part of the world than in the old one. There are now many people alive in *Louiſiana*, who have been there ever ſince its firſt ſettlement. I ſaw a planter

a planter called *Graveline*, aged one hundred and eighteen years, who came hither with M. *d'Iberville*, in 1698; he served in *Canada* as a soldier for about thirty years, in the reign of *Lewis* the Fourteenth.

I am, SIR, &c.

End of the FIRST VOLUME.

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